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THE DICKENSIAN

EDITED BY WALTER DEXTER

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR DICKENS LOVERS

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FULLY ILLUSTRATED

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Vol. XXXIV. WINTER 1937-38 No. 245

THE SEASON'S GREETINGS.

SHADE OF CHARLES DICKENS } (*together*). "SO THIS IS CHRISTMAS!"
CHRISTMAS-CARD ROBIN . . }

Cartoon by Sir Bernard Partridge
in "Punch," 24th December, 1924

(*See Page* 27)

EDUCATION—ACCORDING TO SQUEERS

From an Unpublished Sketch by Phiz

At Mr. Wackford Squeers's Academy, Dotheboys Hall, at the delightful village of Dotheboys, near Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, youths are boarded, clothed, booked, furnished with pocket-money, provided with all necessaries, instructed in all languages, living and dead, mathematics, orthography, geometry, astronomy, trigonometry, the use of the globes, algebra, single-stick (if required), writing, arithmetic, fortification, and every other branch of classical literature. Terms, twenty guineas per annum. No extras, no vacations, and diet unparalleled.

* * * * *

I don't suppose there's a man going, as possesses the fondness for youth as I do. There's youth to the amount of eight hundred pound a year at Dotheboys Hall at this present time. I'd take sixteen hundred pound worth, if I could get 'em, and be as fond of every individual twenty pound among 'em as nothing should equal it.

* * * * *

We go upon the practical mode of teaching ; the regular education system. C-l-e-a-n, clean, very active, to make bright, to scour. W-i-n, win, d-e-r, der, winder, a casement. When the boy knows this out of book he goes and does it.

* * * * *

B-o-t, bot, t-i-n, tin, bottin, n-e-y, ney, bottinney, noun substantive, a knowledge of plants. When he has learned that bottinney means a knowledge of plants, he goes and knows 'em.

* * * * *

A horse is a quadruped, and quadruped's Latin for beast, as everybody that's gone through the grammar, knows, or else where's the use of having grammars at all ?

* * * * *

When a boy gets weak and ill and don't relish his meals, we give him a change of diet—turn him out, for an hour or so every day, into a neighbour's turnip-field, or sometimes, if it's a delicate case, a turnip field and a piece of carrot alternately, and let him eat as many as he likes.

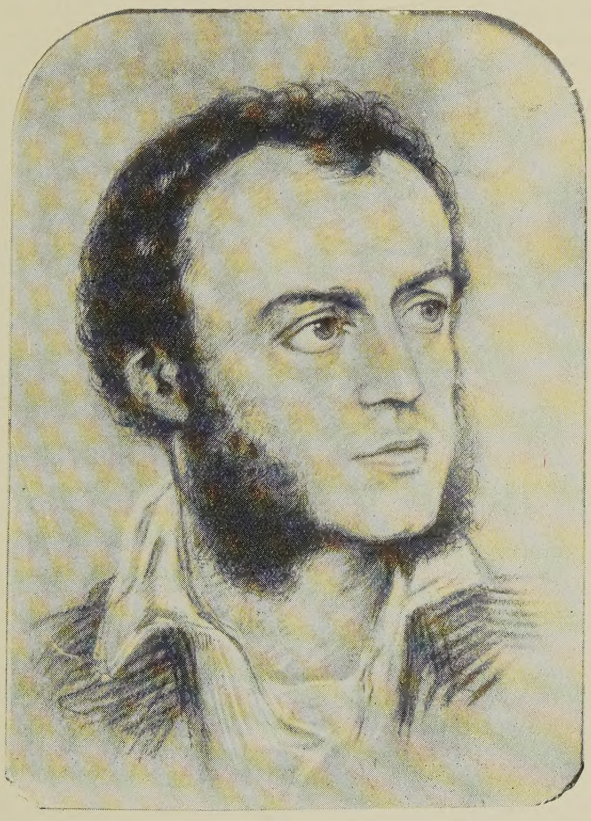
* * * * *

You came to the right shop for mercy when you came to me, and thank your stars that it *is* me as has got to serve you with the article.

LETTERS TO JOHN LEECH

NOW FIRST PRINTED

[The death at Leatherhead, in the early part of the present year, of Mr. Henry Alfred White, has brought to light a collection of eighty-five letters of Dickens to John Leech. This collection has come into the possession of Count de Suzannet, by whose kind permission *The Dickensian* is once again in a position to give its readers a series of letters of great interest and importance.



John Leech

No letters of Dickens to Leech have hitherto been published, but that some correspondence must have taken place between the two men during their long years of friendship appeared certain. A year or two ago, two letters to Leech came upon the market and were secured by Count de Suzannet for his unique library. Eighty-seven letters are now known to have survived, to which should be added two letters of Dickens to Mrs. Leech.

The history of the letters is a short one. On the death of Leech in

1864, they became the property of his widow who guarded them most zealously and bequeathed them to her husband's old friend, Henry Silver. Silver had been Leech's schoolfellow at Charterhouse and was a member of the "Punch table" until the death of Mark Lemon, when he resigned. When Henry Silver died, the letters became the property of Mr. H. A. White, a residuary legatee, who took as great a pride in their possession as had the two former owners.

That two letters, at least, should have become detached from the collection as mentioned above, is somewhat remarkable. Quite possibly of course, these letters (dated March 3rd 1849 and July 4th 1855) may have been given away by Leech during his life-time.—THE EDITOR.]

* * * * *

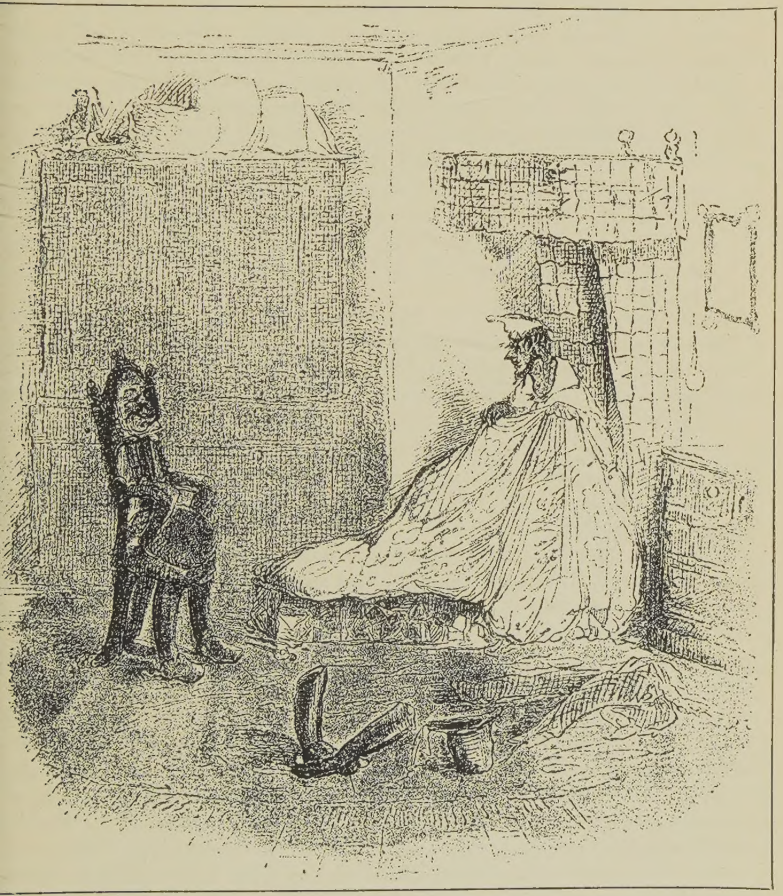
JOHN LEECH was born at No. 28, Bennett Street, Stamford Street, Southwark, London, on 29th August, 1817. His birthplace still stands, and is distinguished by a Tablet. Leech was consequently a little more than five years the junior of Dickens, who had many early associations with the same neighbourhood.

He was educated at Charterhouse, and later studied medicine, but soon drifted into art. At a little over seventeen years of age, he published a small book of sketches of street characters entitled "Etchings and Sketchings by A. Pen, Esq." "Price, 2/- plain, 3/- coloured." It was one of the earliest productions by lithography.

In 1836, he became a regular contributor of illustrations to "Bell's Life in London." This was not long after Dickens's connexion with the same periodical.

When, and under what circumstances, did the first meeting occur between Dickens and the young artist, who was later to become one of his closest friends? Forster is silent on the subject, and the first accounts of any communication between the two men are to be found in F. G. Kitton's "Dickens and his Illustrators" and Joseph Grego's "Pictorial Pickwickiana," both published in 1899. The former writes: "When the sad death of Robert Seymour, the original illustrator of *Pickwick*, was announced, Leech immediately conceived the idea of seeking election as his successor. Boz at this time was absolutely unknown to him except by that strange pseudonym, so the ambitious young artist communicated his desire to the publishers, Chapman and Hall, to whom he sent as a specimen of his powers a clever drawing delicately tinted in colour of Tom Smart and the Chair." Grego's statement is as follows: "About the same time, John Leech had also entered the field. . . . More consideration was given to his application than was offered to the sketches submitted by Thackeray, for to Leech was proposed a subject for illustration . . . and he accordingly sent in a pencil drawing . . . which remained in the possession of the publishers." Recent discoveries prove that both Kitton's story and that of Grego are in some measure incorrect. The true facts of the case may be gathered from a letter written by Dickens to Chapman and Hall in August, 1836 (printed for the first time in *The Dickensian*, 1937, pages 7-8), and by the opening letter of Dickens's correspondence

vith Leech. These letters show that in June or early in July, 1836, Leech must have approached Dickens himself with his offer to illustrate *Pickwick*, and that in August of the same year he made a second ttempt to the same purpose. The drawing of Tom Smart and the Chair was not suggested by Chapman and Hall but was conceived by



"Tom Smart and the Chair," by John Leech

he artist after reading the story in Part V of *The Pickwick Papers* nd submitted directly by him to Dickens. Dickens's answer, the pening letter of his correspondence with Leech, was as follows:

15 Furnivals Inn.
Wenesday Morning.

Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your design from the last Pickwick, which I think extremely well conceived, and executed.

I can only repeat however, what I at first said when I had the pleasure of seeing you—namely that the plates for the Pickwick Papers are in the hands of a gentleman of very great ability, with whose designs I am exceedingly well satisfied, and from whom I feel it neither my wish, nor my interest, to part.

Thinking at the same time, that perhaps your wish may be, for Chapman & Hall to see your drawing, with the view of removing some erroneous impression of your ability, which you conceive them to have formed, I have forwarded it to them with a short note this morning. I think they are already provided with an artist for the Library of Fiction though, and can hold out no present hope of their requiring your assistance. I cannot speak with confidence relative to this last work, because I have no connection with it.

I am, Sir,

Your most obed$^{t.}$ Serv$^{t.}$

Charles Dickens.

— Leech, Esq$^{re.}$

Leech does not appear to have obtained any commissions from Chapman and Hall, but he was not entirely lost sight of by Dickens. There is an undated letter from Dickens to J. P. Harley (probably written in 1837 when the two men were in close touch), which says, " I enclose Mr. Leech's sketch ; you can tell me what you think of it when you see me to-morrow morning. I think he has not got the face well, or the hat. The general character is very good." This was probably a sketch of Harley in one of his characters, but we have no precise knowledge on the point.

Although Leech proved unsuccessful in his application to illustrate the " Library of Fiction," he supplied three plates for a sequel to that periodical which Ollier brought out under the same title in June, 1837, but which ended with the second number.

It was not until some three years later that Leech came into prominence as an illustrator.

The year 1840 added several pieces of work to his credit. There was " The Fiddle-Faddle Fashion Book," and then the drawings to accompany Albert Smith's " The Physiology of Evening Parties," and those for the " Comic Latin Grammar," by Percival Leigh, who had been a fellow-student at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. " Portraits of Children of the Mobility " and " Written Caricatures " followed in 1841 as well as the illustrations for " Colin Clink," a novel by C. Hotten. The following year, Leech illustrated " Richard Savage," by Charles Whitehead—the man who, it will be remembered, might have written the " monthly something " that Dickens made into *Pickwick*.

But already in 1841 Leech was working for " Bentley's Miscellany " ; and early in that year he was announced as being one of the artists engaged for the new publication, " Punch." However it was not until August 7th, 1841, when " Punch " was three weeks old that his first picture appeared in that famous weekly. It was a full page picture entitled " Foreign Affairs. It is said it displeased many readers, and sent down considerably the already very modest circulation

of that periodical. The result of this was that there were no further Leech drawings in Vol. 1 or in Vol. 2. But with Vol. 3, Leech really commenced his association with "Punch," an association which lasted unremittingly for over twenty years, during which time he contributed over three thousand drawings to its pages; and, of these, 720 were Cartoons. It is stated that he received no less than £40,000 for his work for "Punch."

An interval of more than six years seems to have elapsed between Dickens's first letter to Leech and the renewal of their correspondence. Leech had never renounced his ambition of illustrating the works of a writer he so greatly admired, and in the autumn of 1842, he ventured once again to offer his services to Dickens, whose new work in monthly parts, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, had just been announced. Dickens's answer is contained in the two following letters, which may be considered as marking the beginning of the friendship that from that time flourished and grew ever closer between the two men and their families.

Private.

1 Devonshire Terrace
York Gate, Regents Park.
Saturday Evening,
Fifth November, 1842.

My Dear Sir,

I have had great pleasure in the receipt of your manly note; which I should have answered sooner, but that I have been in Cornwall for some days, and am only just now returned.

I had quite forgotten the circumstance to which you refer, and have never blamed you in the smallest degree. But I have never forgotten the having seen you some years ago, or ceased to watch your progress with much interest and satisfaction. I congratulate you heartily on your success; and myself on having had my eye upon the means by which you have obtained it.

If it can possibly be arranged consistently with that regard which I feel bound to pay to Mr. Browne, I shall be truly happy to avail myself of your genius in my forthcoming monthly work. Until I have communicated with him (which I will do immediately) in reference to a project which has occurred to me, I cannot well explain myself further. But I will write you again, in the course of next week; and will tell you exactly how my arrangements stand.

In the meantime let me say with perfect sincerity, that I shall hope, in any case to improve your acquaintance, and not to lose sight of you any more.

My Dear Sir, believe me
Faithfully yours
Charles Dickens.

John Leech, Esquire.

Private.

1 Devonshire Terrace
Monday Seventh November [1842].

My Dear Sir,

I find that there are so many mechanical difficulties complications, entanglements, and impossibilities, in the way of the

project I was revolving in my mind when I wrote to you last, as to render it quite impracticable. I perceive that it could not be satisfactory to you, as giving you no fair opportunity; and that it would in practice, be irksome and distressing to me. I am therefore compelled to relinquish the idea, and for the present to deny myself the advantage of your valuable assistance.

But as I desire, notwithstanding, to lay a small quantity of salt on the tail of your private and personal coat, will you give me the means of doing so, by joining our family dinner table next Sunday at half past five ?

Faithfully yours

Charles Dickens.

John Leech, Esquire.

In 1843 came Leech's chance to work for Chapman and Hall and illustrate Dickens. He was commissioned to supply eight illustrations for *A Christmas Carol*; four of these were etched on steel and afterwards coloured by hand; the remaining four were drawn on wood and engraved by W. J. Linton. These drawings, especially that of " Mr. Fezziwig's Ball " are almost as famous as the story itself.

The spring of the following year saw the first Dickensian cartoon in " Punch "; it was the work of Leech, and depicted " Henry asking for more," Henry Lord Brougham being the Oliver.* This was on March 30th, 1844. Four months later, while *Martin Chuzzlewit* was still in course of publication, the first Gamp and Prig cartoon (also by Leech) appeared in " Punch," 27th July, 1844.

At the end of 1844 *The Chimes* was published. The thirteen illustrations for it were provided by four different artists—two of them Royal Academicians—(which John Leech was not—to which we shall refer later). Leech supplied five of the pictures.

As we all know, *The Chimes* was written in Italy; but at the end of November, Dickens made a special journey home to read the story to a select circle of friends at Forster's house. The drawing by Leech, representing the return of the unkempt Richard, required a slight alteration, and immediately on arrival in London Dickens sent Leech the following letter:

Piazza Coffee House
Covent Garden.
Sunday December First 1844.

My Dear Leech,

You have done gallantly for my little book. And I am greatly pleased with this new token of your talent and interest, believe me.

Will you come and breakfast with me here, tomorrow, at Ten ? There is a slight alteration in one of your blocks (explainable in half a minute) which I want to tell you of.

Always

Faithfully yours

Charles Dickens.

* See *The Dickensian*, 1936, page 182.

I beg my compliments to Mrs. Leech. Mrs. Dickens and her sister, charged me with many kind messages to you both.

Leech promptly and readily made the necessary alteration, and Dickens addressed him the following letter of thanks two days later:

Leech's Famous Drawing for *A Christmas Carol*

From an electro kindly supplied by the Nonesuch Press Ltd. from the original block now being used by them for the Nonesuch Dickens.

Piazza Coffee House, Covent Garden.
Tuesday Morning. [December 3rd, 1844].

My Dear Leech,

On coming home here, late last night, I found your note. The alteration in respect of the figure of Richard will be quite

sufficient ; and I assure you that your cheerful readiness to give yourself trouble on my account gratifies me exceedingly. It is a real pleasure to me to say so, and to work with you. I have the greatest diffidence in suggesting any change, however slight, in what you do—you are so ready to make it.

Always believe me
Faithfully yours
Charles Dickens.

John Leech, Esquire.

In " Punch " for 22nd February, 1845, appeared a cartoon " Bowley Interrogating Trotty Veck," which is not only remarkable for the fact that the book from which it was taken had been published less than two months earlier, but that Leech had adapted his own drawing " Sir Joseph Bowley's " to his need as a political cartoonist. A week later appeared a very original drawing " in worsted," of Trotty Veck.*

On September 20th, 1845, at Miss Kelly's Theatre in Dean Street, Dickens and his friends made their first appearance in Ben Jonson's " Every Man in His Humour." Leech played the part of Master Mathew, which he sustained at the St. James's Theatre on 15th November in the same year ; at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, on 26th July, 1847 ; at the Haymarket Theatre, London, on 17th May, 1848 ; and at Lord Lytton's house, at Knebworth, on 18th, 19th and 20th November, 1850.

The letters of 10th August and 1st October, 1845, have reference to the first performances of the play. Charles Eaton, Leech's brother-in-law, took over Gilbert à Beckett's part of William at the St. James's Theatre performance in November. He also played the part of Roger Formal at the Haymarket Theatre in 1848, and the Coachman in the farce " Love, Law and Physick," at the same theatre. He played Rugby in the performances of " The Merry Wives of Windsor."

Devonshire Terrace
Sunday Tenth August 1845.

My Dear Leech,

Can you come here tomorrow (Monday) afternoon, by a quarter before 6, and not later ? I have appointed the English Opera House tailor to come at that time ; and I have found a picture, I think, which is the very thing for your dress.

Faithfully yours
Charles Dickens.

John Leech, Esquire.

1 Devonshire Terrace
October 1st, 1845.

My Dear Leech,

I beg to inform you that the whole of the accounts arising out of the Play, have been got in and paid ; and that your share of the gross expenses (including the supper and every incidental

* See *The Dickensian*, 1935, pages 265-6.

charge) amount to £10 4. 0. which you can forward to me, if you please at your convenience.

The cost of a repetition of the comedy and Farce, would be about £3 to each of us.

Faithfully yours

Charles Dickens.

John Leech, Esquire.

The body of this letter is in the handwriting of Georgina Hogarth. The words " My Dear Leech " and the signature are in the autograph of Dickens.

Devonshire Terrace,

Second October 1845.

My Dear Leech,

To my business note to you, and enclosure for your brother in law,* I add a line to say that I hope I may again count on your assistance in my little Christmas Book. I am now settling myself to work ; and hope in ten days or so, to be in a condition to wind you up and set you going.

If you are in the mood, therefore, to illustrate my poor fancies, we will hold discourse together on the subject, in about that time. We intend publishing earlier than usual this year.

Ever yours

C.D.

Devonshire Terrace,

Seventeenth October 1845.

My Dear Leech,

James Heywood is a man of great consideration in Manchester, and of great attainments. You must regard his invitation (Manchesterially speaking) as a great compliment. I have refused it : simply because I am beaten almost out of heart by all manner of occupations, and wouldn't be a Provincial Lion at this time, in a private way, for I don't know how many shares in the Great Grimsby Junction. No Master Mathew ! refuse James Heywood, and repair to an honest Inn with honest Gentlemen. Jerrold and I (and you) will start on Wednesday morning somewhere about 9. I will tell you the exact hour when we meet at Macready's on Tuesday.

Ever heartily yours

Bobadil.

The Christmas book referred to in the letter of the Second October, 1845, and those of the following month was *The Cricket on the Hearth* for which Leech provided seven out of the fourteen illustrations by four artists.

Edwin Landseer, R.A., supplied a single drawing, that of the dog Boxer ; and as Leech wished to introduce the dog into one of his pictures it was necessary that both animals should have somewhat the

* The letter to Charles Eaton was similar to that written to Leech dated 1 October.

same appearance; with what success (or otherwise) Leech achieved this, a comparison of the two pictures will show!

Devonshire Terrace,
Tuesday Evening,
Eighteenth November 1845

My Dear Leech,

Edwin Landseer pledges himself to forward Boxer tomorrow. I will send him to you as soon as he comes to hand.

Always faithfully,
Charles Dickens.

John Leech, Esq.

My Dear Leech,

Here is Boxer on Box. Everything in a concatenation accordingly.

Will you send him on to B and E, tomorrow morning?

Ever yours
C.D.

Devonshire Terrace
Wednesday Night [19th November 1845].

Devonshire Terrace.
Saturday Night.
[end of November 1845.]

My Dear Leech,

If I could urge anything against the last block it would be that my good friend the Carrier is hardly handsome enough. I have not seen the others, but have no doubt Jones acted wisely, to save time.

Cordially yours
C.D.

John Leech, Esquire.

There were three "Punch" cartoons by Leech during 1846, that of 31st January, being once again an adaptation of one of his own drawings for *The Cricket on the Hearth*, "The Political Tilly Slow-Boy and Cobden's Baby."* The other two were "The Artful Dodger" on 10th January, and "The Royal Fagin of France" on 3rd April.†

This same year Leech executed three drawings for *The Battle of Life*. We do not find any letters about these in the correspondence before us; there probably were none: but there was a curious error made by Leech in the picture of the Elopement. Warden had no business in it. "He was never there!" wrote Dickens to Forster. "In the first hot sweat of surprise I was going to implore the printing of that sheet to be stopped, and the figure taken out of the block.

* See *The Dickensian*, 1935, page 294.
† See *The Dickensian*, 1936, pages 187 and 201.

But when I thought of the pain this might give to our kind-hearted Leech, and that what is such a monstrous enormity to me, as never having entered my brain, may not so present itself to others, I became

Leech's Incorrect Drawing for *The Battle of Life*

From an electro kindly supplied by the Nonesuch Press Ltd. from the original block now being used by them for the Nonesuch Dickens.

more composed ; though the fact is wonderful to me . . . Leech otherwise very good, and the illustrations altogether are by far the best that ave ever been done for any of the Christmas books."

[*To be continued*]

AUNT SOPHY AND JOHN MACRONE

THE titles of two consecutive contributions to the Summer Number of *The Dickensian*, "Macrone and *Sketches by Boz*" and "Sophy's Birthday Party," suggest a little story appertaining to an aunt; not "Charley's Aunt" or "Mr. F's Aunt," both of whom may be said to be still with us, but to a long-since departed aunt of George Augustus Sala, named Aunt Sophy.

In the early eighteen-thirties, two young fellows, probably of Irish descent, living in the Isle of Man, decided to cross over to England and seek fame and fortune in the city of London. They had been reading the story of Dick Whittington. One of the young men, a tall handsome fellow named Crellin, commenced operations in the sartorial line at 4 St. James's Street, where he appears to have prospered and to have numbered amongst his clientele many distinguished men of the day, including William Makepeace Thackeray. The other young man, not so tall but, nevertheless, an equally handsome fellow, by name John Macrone, joined forces with a Mr. Cochrane in a publishing business carried on in Waterloo Place. The partnership did not endure for very long however, and in about 1834 Macrone commenced publishing on his own account at St. James's Square, not far from his friend the tailor. Meanwhile Mr. Crellin had succumbed to the charms of a young lady named Miss Eliza Sala, whom he eventually married. The result of Mr. Macrone's introduction to Miss Eliza was that he made the acquaintance of her sister, Sophy. She soon fell under the spell of the not-so-tall-but-equally-handsome young publisher, and within a comparatively short time the lover had induced his beloved to lend him £500. Shortly afterwards the engagement was broken off; we do not know for what reason, but whatever the cause, Macrone married someone else and Sophy died in the year 1837.

Thirteen years later, in 1850, her nephew, George Augustus Sala submitted to Charles Dickens an article he had written entitled "Key of the Street" with a view to its publication in *Household Words*. Dickens thought highly of it and Sala became a regular contributor to the periodical. It was also in the year 1850 that Aunt Eliza died and her nephew benefited under her will. George Augustus tells us that on calling upon his departed Aunt's solicitors to receive his legacy, the senior partner, Mr. T. Burgoyne, produced from a tin box John Macrone's unredeemed bond for £500, which he had given to Aunt Sophy. With a smile the man of law asked him if he thought that the piece of parchment in question would be of any service to his family. Sala replied, that none of them were snuff takers, else the parchment would do very well with the help of a spatula and a little water for mixing rappee with Irish blackguard. George further averred that Macrone purchased the copyright of *Sketches by Boz* from Charles Dickens with some of the £500 he borrowed from Aunt Sophy. Such is the story conjured up by the names Macrone and Sophy, according to the facts laid down by George Augustus Sala.

LEO MASON.

OUR CAROL

By J. H. McNULTY

A CHRISTMAS CAROL stands out alone as the one perfect short story Dickens wrote. We may say of it as Macaulay said of " Boswell's Life of Johnson," " Eclipse is first and the rest nowhere." Dickens's other Christmas stories have little more to do with the festive season than " Winter's Tale " has to do with winter, but this story is Christmas itself—Past, Present and To Come. After the Bible it is the best-known book in the language, and it has this unique distinction that if every copy were destroyed to-day, it could be rewritten to-morrow, so many know the story by heart. Even so, it may be possible to say something about it which if not new, is at least not too well-known or stale.

It begins in a fog, not such a great fog as that with which *Bleak House* opens, for that is probably the greatest fog in literature. All Londoners have a secret affection for fog. It is the one thing London can, or at least could, produce to perfection. We cannot boast of our cloudless skies, they are too rare, " like Angels' visits, few and far between " ; nor of our statues, they are often an insult to the memory of those in whose honour they are supposed to be erected ; nor may we boast of our city churches, they are so frequently threatened with destruction, though the sentence has sometimes been deferred ; nor of our ancient buildings, we destroy them as quickly as we can to make room for new ones.

But fog is ours. We loved it when we were young and when we discover that it has greater discomforts than pleasures we are on the verge of middle or old age. As Dickens never grew old we may well believe he never made that discovery.

The fogginess of Christmas Eve is used here for the sake of contrast to the " clear, bright, jovial, stirring cold " of Christmas Day, a day all blue and silver. There is a world of difference between the two days and the change from darkness to light, from fog to sunshine helps to show it. Then what a splendid background does the fog make to all Scrooge's visitors on that foggy afternoon.

How much more jolly and lively did Scrooge's nephew appear coming as he does out of the encircling gloom. How much more solid and benevolent did the portly gentlemen look emerging from the icy yellow mirk outside, even the voice of the carol singer at the keyhole might have sounded cheerful, if Scrooge had not silenced it, coming out of the surrounding darkness. Fog is the reverse of the Daylight Saving Act. It really does lessen the hours of daylight which the Act pretends to increase. Darkness, too, is necessary as a prelude to the appearance of Marley's Ghost. Shakespeare did a similar thing in Macbeth as a preparation for the dreadful vision of the dagger and the still more dreadful murder. It was night without moon or stars.

Banquo and Fleance and a servant with a torch are seen in a Court within the Castle.

BANQUO : How goes the night, boy ?

FLEANCE: The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.
BANQUO: And she goes down at twelve.
FLEANCE: I take't, tis later, sir.
BANQUO: Hold take my sword: There's husbandry in heaven,
Their candles are all out . . .

So it is here. Scrooge left his gloomy office, made his way through the dark, foggy streets, "dined at his usual melancholy tavern, and having read all the newspapers and beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's book, went home to bed." He passed through the streets, now grown much darker, to his still more gloomy chambers where Marley, his deceased partner, had died seven years before on that very night. Here one must admire Scrooge's superb courage. As he paused before the street door, the knocker suddenly assumed the features of Marley; after a moment it resumed its original form. Scrooge entered the house, darker and more gloomy even than the street, and mounted the broad staircase. Again a horrid fancy assailed him that a hearse was going up before him; without a moment's hesitation he proceeded to his room and entered. Now Scrooge was not at his best to-night; he was suffering from a cold in his head—a most depressing malady, and was taking for it an even more depressing remedy—gruel. As he sat by the fire sipping this detestable beverage the bell in his room began to move slowly to and fro, then faster and then all the bells began ringing together.

There is nothing more unnerving than a bell that rings with no visible hand to ring it. When the sexton in *Barnaby Rudge* heard the ghostly bell toll before he touched his bell, he nearly fainted, rang his bell, how or how long he did not know, and ran home as fast as he could. Scrooge did not run away, he faced the music if you can call it such. Besides, where could he go? The office was closed, it was a bitter night, and there was nowhere else. He said, "Humbug."

The ringing was followed by the clanking of chains, footsteps on the stair, and the entrance of the terrible phantom. Scrooge seeing that the phantom was transparent, asked it to sit down, believing such an act to be impossible, and then there followed that excellent conversation which cannot be too much admired:

"You don't believe in me," observed the Ghost.

"I don't," said Scrooge.

"Why do you doubt your senses?"

"Because," said Scrooge, "a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of underdone potato. There's more of gravy than grave about you, whatever you are!"

. . . . . .

"I have but to swallow this (toothpick)," continued Scrooge, "and be for the rest of my days persecuted by a legion of goblins, all of my own creation. Humbug, I tell you—humbug!"

Compare this with another conversation with a ghost, that between Hamlet and his father's spirit.

While the spirit is present, Hamlet speaks to it with the deepest verence, but the moment it disappears, talks of it as "True-penny," Fellow in the cellarage," "Old Mole." This is indefensible.

With Scrooge it is quite a different matter. He and Marley had been rtners and equals, whatever respect he had for Marley living he had ne for his ghost, and in his pleasant sprightly conversation he showed

It was not till the ghost did that unpardonable thing, took off the ndage round its head and let its lower jaw drop on its breast that rooge's courage gave way and he fell upon his knees in terror; a an less brave than he would have been reduced to that state long fore. Scrooge had not so many virtues that we should grudge him e possession of this one of courage.

It is not very astonishing that after his encounter with this horrible antom he did not welcome the gift it promised him of a visit from ree other spirits.

It is well known to all readers of Dickens that when he is deeply oved, his prose becomes lyrical. Many passages in *The Old Curiosity iop* and *A Tale of Two Cities* can, with the change of a word or two, come blank verse. It is, however, rather surprising that towards e end of his interview with Scrooge, Marley's ghost speaks in verse id utters the two most beautiful lines of verse that Dickens ever rote.

"At this time of the rolling year," the spectre said, "I suffer most. hy did I walk through crowds of fellow beings with my eyes turned wn.

> And never raised them to that blessed Star
> Which led the Wise Men to a poor abode."

After the prelude comes the Carol proper. One of its chief beauties that it is essentially a true story. It is our carol, not merely the ory of Scrooge's conversion but of Everyman's experience. What appened to Scrooge does happen to us. Many of us have known or ave been Bob Cratchits, receiving from the Scrooges of our days the odern equivalent of fifteen shillings a week. We all know, or can sily find, plenty of Tiny Tims, many of whom unfortunately do die.

The Three Spirits also visit us. On Christmas Eve, the Ghost of ristmas Past appears. He comes laden with memories sad or bright id often bright with tears.

> "Then the forms of the departed
> Enter at the open door;
> The beloved, the true-hearted,
> Come to visit us once more;"

e bears a lamp, the Lamp of Memory, and the light of other days. ne light may be dimmed or the memory dulled, but it is never enched; "though Scrooge pressed it (the extinguisher) down with his force, he could not hide the light." This Spirit brings us emories of all the Golden Christmases of the Past.

He is aged " like an old man " for he is nearly 2,000 years old. Y[et] he has the face of a child without a wrinkle, for Christmas is th[e] children's Feast and is always young and fresh. He bears a branch of holly, the most cheerful of evergreens, for Christmas is evergreen and unfading, and his dress is trimmed with summer flowers, f[or] Christmas is the summer-time of the heart.

The Ghost of Christmas Present is a cheerful spirit and insists on us being the same. He reminds us that cheerfulness is a virtue, a[nd] though sometimes as difficult to practise as any other, one that shoul[d] be particularly practised at Christmas-time. The visit of his elder brother may have left us sad, but he will take no denial. If we plead that our hearts are heavier and our pockets lighter than in past years and that we have little indeed to make us cheerful, he will show us as he did Scrooge, many others who are in a far worse plight than we are, and have far less to make them happy than we have, yet who manage to preserve a cheerful face and light heart in their struggle with misfortune. He tells us that spiritual healing differs from physical, that here you bind up another's wounds in order to heal your own, and that the easiest way of becoming happy is to make others so.

Dickens has beautifully distinguished between the methods of approach of these Two Spirits. The Ghost of Christmas Past comes to Scrooge whether he will or no, and compels him to visit the scenes of his former life. He objects, but the Spirit insists.

The Ghost of Christmas Present does not appear at all. Scrooge discovers his presence by the light streaming from the adjoining room and goes out to meet him. So it is with us. Memories of the Past will come to us on Christmas Eve whether we wish it or not. No door is stout enough to shut them out, but we can if we choose close our hearts against the duties of Christmas Present, though if we are wise we shall, like Scrooge, go to meet and welcome him.

Like Scrooge, too, we must view with apprehension the approach of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, that " solemn Phantom draped and hooded." Silence is the most terrible of his attributes and to us also, the Future is silent, silent as the grave.

Do what we may we cannot help fearing his approach. We can, however, rob him of much of his horror by treating his two elder brothers well, and then he may turn out to be nothing more terrible than a bedpost, " and the bedpost was Scrooge's own."

He is the only one of the Spirits to be explained away as in a common Ghost Story. So Scrooge awakes, and so do we, to find that Christmas Present is still with us and the gloomy phantom not yet on the horizon.

The Carol is a true story and we may be sometimes tempted to do with it what others have done elsewhere with other true stories. Just as historians have occasionally written History with an If: What would have happened *if* Napoleon had won the Battle of Waterloo or what would be the state of England *if* the General Strike had succeeded ? so we may ask what sort of a Carol should we have

:rooge had died before Marley ? or how did Scrooge spend the ıristmas Day after his dream ?

We know he had difficulty in dressing as he kept running about his ·om all the time, that shaving was not an easy matter for his hand as shaky. In the afternoon he went to his nephew's, but how did he ıend his time there ? The book does not tell us, but we can guess. ow could any kind-hearted man, and Scrooge was now a reformed ıaracter, go to a Christmas Party and keep that wonderful story to ımself ? Of course he told it. After dinner they would gather round ıe fire while Scrooge spoke of his wonderful dream. How they would ıudder and look apprehensively at the dark corners of the room as :rooge described the awful phantom, Marley's ghost. How they ould shed a silent tear with the coming of the Ghost of Christmas ast and then brighten up at the approach of the cheerful spirit of hristmas Present. A slight shiver of apprehension would go round ıe circle as the Last of the Spirits made his appearance, and then :rooge would cry, " What do you think he was, my dears ? A bed-ost, my own bedpost, and here I am to tell the tale."

Next day over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop he would tell ob Cratchit the story, and go home with him to finish that gigantic ırkey which even the voracious young Crachits could never have ıten in one day. These are the people who, we may imagine, would ear that story first which now the whole world has heard and applauded. he one short story which can take its place among the great novels. here it stands like a pigmy amongst giants, the Tiny Tim of the ickens family who does not die ; a very little volume—but a nugget of ld is always small ; a good Englishman's version of the Angels' ng.

This is the book that has ensured a favourable answer to the prayer another story, " Lord keep my memory green." It has done more an any other to keep his memory green, an evergreen which like the oly Thorn of Glastonbury blossoms at Christmas-time, and by ıking his name with that of Christmas has given him a share in the ımortality of the immortal festival.

How bright the little volume shines and glows
Like holly berries mid the winter snows,
Telling its tale as fragrant as the rose.

Ever at Christmas-time it re-appears,
Filling the hour with laughter and with tears,
Recalling memories of vanished years.

While from *The Carol's* music which now rings
Throughout the world, giving to Hope new wings,
We learn the loveliness of little things.

Little and great ; for as the rising sun
Gives the glad tidings, " Christmas Day's begun "
The Carol ends, " God bless us everyone."

SOME CANDID OPINIONS ON *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

BY NORMAN BERROW*

THERE has been much said this evening in praise, I might almost say in adulation, of Charles Dickens. Just by way of a change I want to offer a few words of criticism. In case some of you might consider these words as something of the nature of an attack, I should like to point out, though there is really no need to do so, that a man who stands in such an impregnable position as Dickens does not fear attack. But a little criticism may not be amiss.

I should like to give some honest opinions on *the* Christmas Book: and by *the* Chistmas Book I mean *A Christmas Carol*, the best known of all the Christmas Books, the one that everybody knows—Dickens-readers and others—the one on which young people so often cut their Dickens-teeth.

You will understand that these are my personal opinions. It is probable that a large number of you will disagree with me: if you do I hope you will get up and say so. Discussion is the life-blood of study, and we are a study-circle. Discussion is as good for the intellect as confession is for the soul.

Well, my candid opinion of *A Christmas Carol* is that it is the best of a rather poor lot of stories. In fact, when I consider that it was written by a giant and a genius like Charles Dickens, I think it is the poor best of an exceedingly poor lot.

To begin with, it is humourless. By that I do not mean that it isn't funny or witty—although it most decidedly isn't either—but I mean that it is, to my mind, devoid of that impalpable flavour that may permeate any book, grave or gay, serious or frivolous; that impalpable flavour that almost instantly puts the reader on good terms with himself and with the author. Humour is that quality in literature that gives content.

Humour has nothing to do with farce or wit. If you look up the word in any good dictionary you will find that it gives some such definition as this: "Disposition of mind or feeling; frame of mind;" and so forth. It is the quality in a book that gains your immediate sympathy with the author, the aims and objects of his writings, and all that he stands for as expressed in his work. In a word, humour in a book, makes you good-humoured.

But *A Christmas Carol* does not give me content, and it does not make me good-humoured; I'm afraid it only irritates me. I have the queerest impression that, though Dickens set himself to write a happy story, he was not altogether a happy man when he wrote it.

My second grievance is that it is childish. The story may not be but the style is. The opening paragraphs, for instance, give me the impression that Dickens was not writing for intelligent grown-ups

* *A paper read before the Christchurch Branch in May last. Mr. Norman Berrow is a well-known New Zealand novelist.*—EDITOR.

but for rather backward children. In the first page or two he seems to be hammering home a few points into the fickle and wandering mind of a backward child. By the time he has finished with the matter, it is quite clear to even a half-witted Troglodyte that, firstly, Marley was dead, and, secondly, that Scrooge was aware of the fact.

In this opening Dickens is, of course, making a bid for the reader's sympathetic attention to his tale; he is striving for that humour I have just spoken of. But honestly, he does not get my sympathetic attention. I think he fails lamentably.

This is very strange when we consider the glorious openings to some of his other books. Consider, for example, that brilliant discourse on the Chuzzlewit family tree; the account of that meeting that is our introduction to the Pickwick Club; the swing and the rhythm of the account of Veneering's first dinner-party. Veneering's dinner-parties were actually rather dreary affairs to attend; but to read about them is sheer delight, a delight which brings a smile to our lips and a sudden gush of warmth to our hearts whenever we come upon the name of Veneering. And that smile is not a smile of sympathy and affection for Veneering and Company, but a smile of sympathy and affection for Dickens and his handling of Veneering and Company. I have to admit that the name of Scrooge brings me no such joyous glow of recognition. I have no smile to summon up for his handling of the firm of Scrooge and Marley (deceased),

But my chief quarrel is with the story as a story. It has, of course, a moral, as I well know. But I hate morals hurled at my defenceless head with the vigour and mercilessness with which this one has been hurled. I prefer to extract the moral from a story for myself. And, having decided to write a moral story for Christmas, Dickens decided also to lay it on with a trowel. You don't gild lilies. You paint 'em. You gild refined gold—see Bible. He painted the lily.

A Christmas Carol is a story about Christmas and the awakening of the Christmas spirit in the stony breast of a miser and a skinflint through the medium of supernatural agencies. It is saturated with an exaggerated Christmas fervour; it is larded with soggy and indigestible lumps of sickly sentiment; and it is—or, rather, it is meant to be—made terrible and hair-raising by the introduction of three ghostly apparitions. Of these I say simply this: they may have raised the hair of our fathers and mothers, but I do not think they curdle the blood in our veins to any great extent. In these days we are, to use a colloquialism, more hard-boiled. And there is the inevitable impossible and sanctimonious infant in the person of Tiny Tim. I am sympathetic towards Tiny Tim because he was a cripple, but had he been a hale and hearty child I should have looked almost with kindness on any person who had made away with him.

Dickens, by the way, was never very happy with children. Look at Little Nell, with her graveyard complex; Paul Dombey, with his philosophical discourses on the subject of the wild waves' conversation; Kit Nubbles, with his unnatural conscientiousness; and others. To say the least of it, his child characters were more than a little smug.

They were angels. We all know very well that children are most decidedly not angels. I have not any children, but if I had and they started speaking and acting like Little Nell, or Little Paul, or Tiny Tim—even if they were cripples—I should have a doctor in right away, and suggest a good hearty blood-letting.

These harsh words are not directed against an author who struggled and fought and passed on to have his place taken by others who came after him. They are directed against the gigantic, irreplaceable figure of the greatest man in English literature, probably the greatest man in the literature of the world. Consequently they are spoken more in sorrow than anger, and without prejudice. They are the candid opinions of one who knows very well that there are those who will spring to the defence of a man, who, incidentally, does not need any defending.

Feeling as I do about the *Christmas Carol*, I rather wonder how Dickens ever came to write it. I have a theory about that, but first I should like to digress a little. I am, in my way, a very humble member of Charles Dickens's profession, and I have often been asked the question: Why does a man write books? Well, there are several answers. He may write a book for money. He has only to write two or three to see the fallacy of that particular answer. He may write a book to gain fame. But there again, apart from a few literary giants, the average author's literary fame—if any—is terribly evanescent and lost in the multitude.

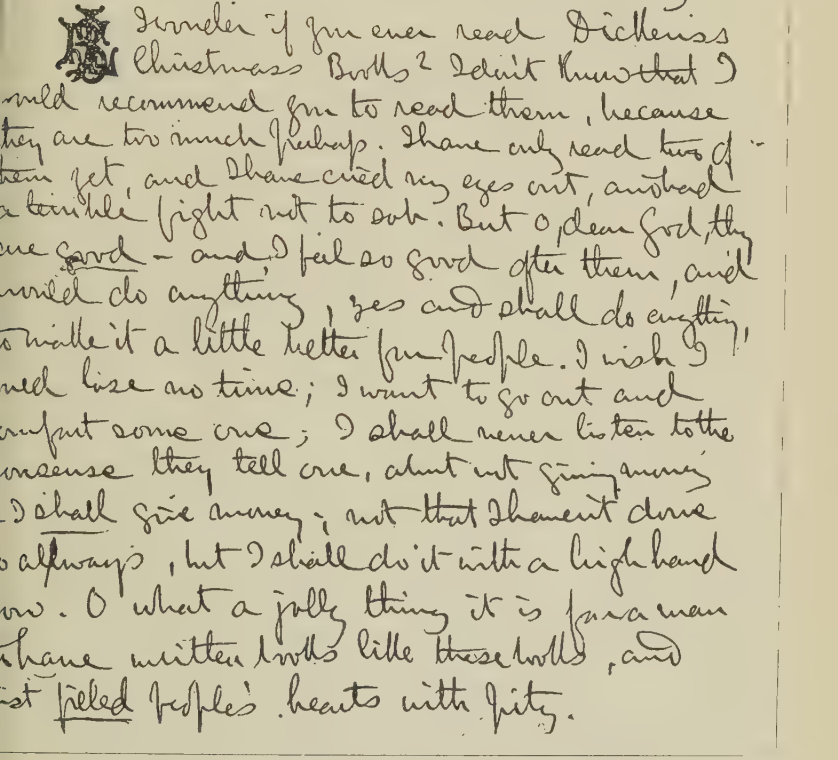
As a matter of fact, the real reason why a man, or a woman, writes fiction is that there is a sort of poison in the blood that wells up and demands outlet in the form of literary expression. The man has to get rid of it or burst. That is a rather forceful way of putting it, but that is the idea. And if he is a born story-teller, no sooner does he get rid of one lot of poison than another wells up inside him. There are, of course, people who feel the urge to write but who never do write. In their case the poison is not so virulent. It wells up, simmers for a time, giving them a kind of mental indigestion, and then dies down again, and they go on with their jobs as usual. There are also pangs in mental creation . . .

But there are also pleasures. I personally get a lot of fun in concocting those slight, if blood-thirsty, yarns of mine. True, the mechanical process of typing three hundred or so pages is apt to grow rather wearisome, but the pleasure is there. A man writes what pleases him, and his writing gives him pleasure. That, of course, I need hardly point out, does not mean to say that it will necessarily please his readers. On the other hand, in my short experience, I have found out that there is a great deal of truth in Emerson's dictum: that a man who writes to please himself, pleases everybody; and a man who writes to please other people, pleases nobody.

Now, in the case of *A Christmas Carol*, I feel that Dickens set out to please other people, and not altogether to please himself. The writing of the *Carol* was not so much a pleasure to him as a task. Christmas had come round again, the next issue of his magazine was to be a Christmas number, therefore a Christmas story had to be

ritten.* And he wrote it, not because he wanted to write it, but ecause convention demanded that it should be written. And so he id not do himself justice.

I put forward another point to be considered at the same time. ickens was in the hey-day of his production—I do not say powers, ecause his powers never waned—in the flood-tide of his popularity.



Robert Louis Stevenson's Tribute to *A Christmas Carol*

e was, I feel sure, an eminently modest man, as all truly great men e, but he was beginning to realise that he was a force in the land. he whole country was laughing uproariously at the antics of Pickwick d his disciples. It had wept over Oliver Twist, followed with breathless erest the adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, devoured *The Old Curiosity op* and *Barnaby Rudge*, and had plunged into *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

* *Mr. Berrow is wrongly informed on this point. "A Christmas Carol" was an entirely rate publication; the publication of the well-known Christmas numbers did not commence il some years later.*—EDITOR.

Dickens had discovered that he could sway the nation, and so, when Christmas time of 1843 came round, he decided to sway the nation with a Christmas Moral Story. I can see him in his study, at the well-known desk with the sloping surface, driving a dogged pen and muttering "I'll make them feel good-will to all men; by Heaven, I will!"

He did the same the following Christmas, with *The Chimes*, and again I get that impression of dogged determination, of the accomplishment of a task. He begged for sympathy—not for himself, but for others—and at the same time, to give force to his message—I might almost say his lecture, his sermon—he made the flesh creep. Or he tried to.

And in placing this condition upon himself, in writing to order, as it were, the creating of a moral story containing nothing that would bring the semblance of a blush to the cheek of the young person and a vast amount of what was good for that same young person, I think we find something of the reason why these Christmas Books, again to my mind, fall far short of his usual brilliantly high standard.

There is not an atom of bitterness in what I have said. These books detract in no way from the huge enjoyment we all get in reading his other works. But I want to remind you, by way of conclusion, that we are Dickens students, and not just blind Dickens worshippers. We should never forget that, though he was a giant, a genius, a mob in revolt, as Chesterton once so aptly and pithily described him, he was also a very human man, subject to very human faults and frailties.

THE DIARY OF JOHN BAILEY

1900.

"I lunched with *Pickwick* very pleasantly and thought again that Dickens is on the whole much more of a man of genius though much less of a man of letters than Thackeray. Sam Weller is surely a creation like nothing of Thackeray's, unless, perhaps, Becky Sharp. And yet Thackeray is ten times his superior as a writer. Always sober, human, musical, and rhythmical, and always in good taste. It is like Shakespeare and his contemporaries—to compare small things with great—Shakespeare who writes execrable things, like Dickens, which a hundred lesser men would have known how to avoid—but wipes them out by giving us Falstaff—or Ophelia."

1917.

"Finished *Curiosity Shop*, which I have certainly never read before. I finished it with breathless interest, not because the story is really convincing—for, as usual with Dickens the villains are too villainous for life and the angels too angelic—but because Dickens *can* make one love and care for his people; and did anyone ever make you jump with joy and jollity as he does when things go right, and all the world flows with milk and honey, or rather with beef, and punch, and porter. That is his greatest strength, after his humour—he loves *living* so, and is always ready to dance and sing about the ordinary incidents of bed and board, the road and the sunlight, dry after wet, warmth after cold. He has vitality enough for a hundred ordinary novelists: though any one of any hundred ordinary storytellers has as much subtlety and distinction of mind as he."—"The Letters and Diaries of John Bailey." John Murray, 1935.

DICKENSIAN PEEPS INTO "PUNCH"

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR

IX.

NATURALLY "Punch" has had much to say on the subject of Dickens and Christmas. In the first article of this series (Autumn, 1935) we confined ourselves to John Leech's use of Dickens as a vehicle for cartoons, and reproduced five large cartoons and smaller drawings by that artist. One remarkable point in connection with those cartoons was that Leech for this purpose drew on some of the pictures which he had done for *The Chimes* and *The Haunted Man*. It was noticed, too, how soon after the publication of the books in question, came the use by "Punch" of scenes and incidents from them.

John Leech, however, never made a cartoon of his own famous illustrations for *A Christmas Carol*.

For the first *Christmas Carol* cartoons in "Punch," Harry Furness was responsible. This was on 26th December, 1885, when he made four drawings to illustrate a clever skit by E. J. Milliken entitled "A Christmas Carol; being a few scattered staves, from a familiar Composition, rearranged for performance, by a Distinguished Musical Amateur, during the Holiday Season at H-rw-rd-n."

Two of the illustrations by Furness are reproduced below. Stave 1 was entitled "Bendizzy's Ghost"—meaning Benjamin Disraeli who appeared to "Scroogestone"—otherwise Gladstone, easily recognised in the accompanying pictures.

Sir John Tenniel came next. His was a full-page cartoon on 30th December, 1893, when Gladstone, now called "Sadstone" was again represented as Scrooge. Milliken was again responsible for the letterpress

A Genuine Christmas Present.

"A Merry Christmas to You!"

Harry Furniss Adapts Leech, 26th December, 1885

which was entitled, "The Spirit of Christmas Present" (Passages from a Political "Christmas Carol" of the Period, descriptive of a slumbering Statesman's Yule-Tide Dream.

From it we select the following description of the room transformed by the Spirit, as viewed by Sadstone:

Cartoon by Tenniel
30th December, 1893

"It was his own room. There was no doubt about that. But it had undergone a surprising transformation. The walls and ceiling were so hung with shamrock green and shillelagh branches that it looked a perfect Grove of Blarney. A lurid blaze, like a blue-tongued snapdragon flare, went hissing up the chimney, revealing in weird glimpses on the heated hearth and chimney tiles spectral figures of impish design and menacing gesture. Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, were Blue Books, abortive Bills, scrolls on which were inscribed endless questions and unnumbered amendments; bundles of party papers and political pamphlets; pallid sucking-pigs that seemed to demand rather opportune interment than human digestion; long wreaths of sausage-like shackles; resurrection pies of indigestible crust and full of offal scraps and tainted "block ornaments"; pudding-shaped bombs; barrels of explosives and fulminants; red-hot (political) 'chestnuts" of the most hackneyed partisan sort; Dead-Sea apples of the dustiest kind, savouring of sand and strife; fiery-looking Ulster oranges; belated (parliamentary) pairs, and seething bowls of raw and vitriolic party spirit, that made the chamber dim, dank, and malodorous with their heady steam. In uneasy state upon this extraordinary conglomerate couch or throne, there sat an ogreish giant of pantomimic size and bogeyishly menacing expression, portentous to see; who bore a smokily-flaring torch, in shape not unlike an Anarch's beacon or Fury's bale-fire, and held it up, high up, to shed its lurid light on Sadstone, as he came peeping round the door.

"Come in!" exclaimed the Ghoul-Ghost. "Come in, and know me better (G. O.) Man!"

A Christmas Carol was again requisitioned in the issue of 25th December, 1901. This time E. T. Reed parodied the well-known drawing by Leech, A. J. Balfour was the Scrooge on this occasion, renamed "Prince Arthur." The letterpress was the work of H. W. Lucy ("Toby, M.P."). The scene was the Prime Minister's residence No. 10 Downing Street, and a great point was made of the fact that

the house of the Chancellor of the Exchequer being next door. This personage (then W. H. Smith) appears in the guise of "Old Morality."

The commencement of the habit of spending Christmas away from home, for winter sports in Switzerland, and elsewhere, first became the vogue in the early days following the war. To "Punch," this departure from the traditional Christmas conjured up a protest from Dickens and was duly pictured in the issue of 24th December, 1924, by a spirited full-page drawing by Sir Bernard Partridge reproduced on page 1.

"Old Morality in his Square Mornings Out"

Sketch by E. T. Reed
25th December, 1901

The only Dickens Christmas cartoon of Linley Sambourne appeared on 25th December, 1901, during the Boer War, when "Private Mark Tapley" spread his joyful philosophy among the troops on the Veldt, saying—in the words of the original Mark, "Do better! To be sure we will. We shall all do better. What we've got to do is to keep up our spirits. We shall all come right in the end, never fear."

Bumble as a character very much in demand by "Punch" cartoonists, will form the subject of a later article in this series; but there are just two cartoons, both by Tenniel which were specially applied to Christmas, and must therefore be included here.

A Bumble-Christmas Cartoon by Tenniel
19th January, 1867

The first was on 19th January, 1867, when the familiar figure of the Clown, then a popular figure in Christmas Pantomime, appears in the act of moving Mr. Bumble on by his Act-of-Parliament-poker, to clear the

Another Bumble-Christmas Cartoon by Tenniel
25th December, 1886

streets of snow. This same character as the barrier to Progress was never better exhibited than by the cartoon of Christmas Day 19 years later entitled "The Spirit of Christmas." "I do assure you, Miss," says Bumble to Charity, "the distress hain't noways exceptional." "No!" answers the "Spirit" of Christmas, "then we must make it so."

The cartoons are reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. Bradbury Agnew and Co. Ltd., the proprietors of "Punch."

CORRECTION. We wish to correct two typographical errors in the "Punch" series in the last number. On page 273 the cartoonist's name should of course be Reed, and the Dick Swiveller cartoon on page 277 was of the year 1887 and not 1867.—EDITOR.

DICKENS STREETS

IN addition to the alterations in street names mentioned on page 296 of the last number, Union Road, late Horsemonger Lane, is henceforth to be known as Harper Road. Johnson Street, Camden Town, where the Dickens family lived in 1824-6, in a house then numbered 29, has been renamed Cranleigh Street. It was from the house (lately demolished) in this street, that young Charles attended Wellington House Academy in the Hampstead Road, a house which is in part still standing.

WINNIPEG OPENS ITS THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR

MARKING the first meeting of the thirty-fourth year of the Winnipeg Branch, several hundred members gathered in the University Building to hear a dramatisation of *David Copperfield*, by Rev. W. G. Martin. The speaker took the audience on a vivid word-picture journey back to the England of David Copperfield's day, giving an epitome of the action and various characters of the story. A vote of thanks was moved by Professor W. T. Allison, who expressed appreciation for a highly dramatic rendering of one of the favourite study subjects of the organisation.

At the November meeting Professor A. J. Perry gave an account of his recent trip to England, entitled "A Visit to Dickensland."

The December meeting will be as usual a recital of *A Christmas Carol* by Mr. H. Gerald Wade.

ORSTER'S REVIEW OF *OLIVER TWIST*

REPRINTED FOR THE FIRST TIME

[We have already shown in the article in the Summer (1937) Number
ge 187, how the great friendship between Dickens and Forster had
s beginning; the last letter but one there printed made mention of
e pleasure Dickens received in hearing from his friend's lips how
liver affected him.

In "The Examiner" of July 2nd, 1837, Forster referred to No. 15
Pickwick saying "In this number the author has achieved his
asterpiece," and in writing to thank him Dickens said: "I feel your
h deep appreciation of my intent and meaning more than the most
owing abstract praise that could possibly be lavished upon me. You
now that I have ever done so, for it was your feeling for me and
ine for you that first brought us together, and I hope will keep us
, till death us do part. Your notices make me grateful but very
roud; so have a care of them."

This letter, written at Calais on July 2nd, 1837, is to be seen in the
ictoria and Albert Museum. Forster misquotes it (refer Ley's
notated edition, page 89), and it is not the first error of a similar
ture made by him. *Oliver Twist* is not mentioned in the letter.

Soon after this Forster wrote for "The Examiner" a long review
just as much as had then appeared of *Oliver Twist* (fifteen chapters).
This review, which appeared on 10th September, 1837, has never been
printed, and we now give it to our readers in full, omitting only the
ng extracts from the story which it contained.—THE EDITOR.]

THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

entley's Miscellany. February to September. OLIVER TWIST; by Charles Dickens, Esq. Bentley.

The story of *Oliver Twist*, so far as it has yet proceeded, is its author's
asterpiece, and mean as the subject appears to be—the account of the
rogress of a Parish Boy—promises to take its place among the higher
ose fictions of the language. Appearing in detached portions in a
onthly magazine, and written, we presume, as the occasion arises
onthly –the variety and vigour of character thrown into each
parate part is indeed surprising. The art of copying from nature
it really exists in the common walks of life has not been carried to
eater perfection, or to finer results in the way of combination, by
e most eminent writers. We have heard it objected to the *Pickwick*
apers that they are now and then extravagant, and certainly, in
ite of the reality of their wit and humour, the sort of extravaganza
adventure they are founded on warrants the objection. But to
liver Twist no such censure in any way applies. The *Pickwick*
ay be lively caricaturing, but this is exact painting. The scrupulous
ader may make what deduction he pleases for the "lowness" of the
bject—the absolute truth and precision of its delineation are not
be disputed. And truly, where the object of a writer is exact
scription, the characteristics of humanity, whether treated of in a
story of kings or of parish boys, are pretty much the same. Indeed
e wish that all history were written in the spirit of Oliver Twist's

history. When the great Fielding proposed to vindicate the use an dignity of his style of writing against the loftier pretensions of profess historians, he merely observed that in their productions nothing wa true but names and dates, whereas in his everything was true b names and dates. Here, unquestionably, the advantage was Fielding's side, and we think Mr. Dickens entitled to the advantage of the comparison also. He has risen to sudden eminence and u precedented popularity by simply pursuing an *original* course. Unlik Washington Irving, who, with many graces and felicities of style, h never got beyond revivals of the *Spectators* and *Tatlers* and such m anachronisms of literature (as though society had made no moveme for the last century)—Mr. Dickens, seeing all the allowances to be ma for change of manners and scene, struck at once at the variety an distinctness of character now actually existing among ourselves, an in that achieved his popularity. In his writing we find *reality*. Parson Adams or a Sir Roger de Coverley are not raised from the de by the galvanic process we have alluded to in Washington Irving case, but yet simplicity and generosity of character, or selfishn and cunning, exist there in like proportions as of old. For we ha not got rid of the vices and absurdities that were the novelists' materi some century since, we have only in a certain sort compounded f them. We refine upon them, disguise them, equivocate with them mor but still they are obvious enough, and of course most obvious in thos classes of society that can least afford refinement or disguise.

Oliver Twist is the history of a child born in a workhouse and brough up by the parish overseers. The account of his mother's death is masterly piece of the tragedy of common life—full of deep patho and with fine touches of the grotesque :—

[Extract]

No one can read this without feeling a strong and sudden intere in Oliver, and the interest never after ceases. We think it necessa to observe, at the same time, that in the first two or three chapte of his history, an unwarrantable and unworthy use is made of certa bugbears of popular prejudice and vulgar cant connected with the ne poor law, which we are surprised to see such a writer as Mr. Dicke resorting to. The attempt to elevate the pauper in our sympathies the cost of the struggling labourer—to leave rate-payers lean wi their work and hunger, so that the pauper may be stuffed to the prop extent of comfort—which all these allusions in Oliver's case wou seem to tend to—is a system of curious philanthropy which we confe we cannot understand. But leaving this, which, as we have sai only colours the first three chapters of Oliver's history, we must adm the force and distinctness with which the various parish authorities a gradually brought upon the scene. In the second chapter Bumbl the parish beadle, and Mrs. Mann, the out-nurse of the branch wor house, poor little Oliver himself, the "gentleman in the white wais coat," and the parish board, carry with them as strongly the convictio of identity as if we had seen the faces ;—in the next three chapte Mr. Gamfield the chimney-sweep, and Sowerberry the undertaker, wi Oliver's mistress, Mrs. Sowerberry, and Oliver's mistress's servan Charlotte, and Noah Claypole, Oliver's fellow apprentice, leave equal distinct impressions of themselves :—and better than all is the exquisi delicacy of natural sentiment, which, in spite of every disadvantag

ings to Oliver himself, and, jostled as he is in this miserable crowd, reserves him from the vice of its pollution. This is beautifully nagined, and is executed in a few of those masterly touches which it the very springs of nature. We see it where Bumble brings him way from the branch workhouse, when an agony of childish grief reaks from him on leaving the wretched home where he had met ith no kind word or look, but which still contains his little com-anions in misery; we follow it through many very tender passages; nd we have it in all its truth and strength in the following scene: oah Claypole is a hulking, cowardly "charity boy," who has borne lently all sorts of ignominious taunts from the shop-boys of the eighbourhood, but now revenges them with interest on the nameless orkhouse orphan:—

[Extract.]

The consequences of this affair are such as to drive poor Oliver to ie desperate expedient of running away from his master, and as he oes this, he has to pass the branch workhouse he was brought up in:—

[Extract.]

Oliver arrives after many sufferings at Barnet, where he meets with young London thief, and is conducted under this respectable escort o the great city. We are then introduced to some scenes and characters mong the London thieves that are quite worthy of Fielding. Principal mong these are the merry old Jew, a supple and black-hearted old illain, made up of cowardice and bile, with his young friends and upils, Jack Dawkins the Dodger and Charley Bates—and Bill Sikes, bold-faced ruffianly brute, with his white hat and white shaggy dog. hese two partners in guilt are excellently contrasted. We give a cene of grave drollery in the filthy house of the Jew, which we take to elong to the highest order of intense comic invention:—

[Extract.]

Oliver walks out with his new young companions, is made their cape-goat, and they raise the cry of "Stop thief" against him:—

[Extract.]

The immediate result of this affair, however, is a temporary happy hange for Oliver. He is proved innocent of the robbery, and taken o the benevolent home of the kind-hearted old gentleman with whom ie charge had innocently originated. Meanwhile, we have had some xquisite illustrations of justices' justice, and a life-like sketch of the otorious Mr. Fang. The following passage will illustrate the fine atire with which our author handles these subjects. Miss Nancy is young female thief belonging to the tribe, and has been sent by the errified old Jew, in genteel disguise, and with a basket and street-door ey in her hand, to seek for Oliver at the police office:—

[Extract.]

Meanwhile, Oliver is enjoying for the first time, comfort and happi-ess. The progress of his slow recovery from an illness watched over ith kindly solicitude, is beautifully told, and some slight but happy ccasional touches serve to connect him more nearly than by common mpathies with his good-hearted benefactor. This old gentleman, r. Brownlow, and his crabbed selfish old friend, Mr. Grimwig, add emselves to the other group of distinct and visible characters in this

veritable history, solidly made out, and well contrasted. But two short extracts more must bring us to a conclusion for the present. The first touches a point which every man of letters must feel more or less, and which it is even possible Mr. Dickens himself may have felt as strongly as some of his great predecessors :—

[Extract.]

The last is a sketch of Mr. Bill Sikes and his dog, very happily conceived, and executed in the true Snarleyyow spirit :—

[Extract.]

We leave Oliver Twist, at a trying point of his story, once more in the haunt of the thieves. We leave him most reluctantly, and so will every reader who has any capacity to see and feel whatsoever is most loveable, hateful, or laughable, in the character of the everyday life about him. We feel as deep an interest in little Oliver's own fate, as in that of a friend we have long known and loved. And yet little Oliver, and all his vicissitudes, and all his motley associates, so far as they have yet gone, are shut up in something less than a hundred pages of *Bentley's Miscellany*. It is a wonderful power which these really fine writers have !

LIBEL. A CHALLENGE

"Dickens and the Modern Novel" was the subject of Mr. Osbert Sitwell's "Northcliffe Lecture on Literature" delivered at London University on October 21st. A few days later at the festival dinner of the Newsvendors' Benevolent Institution the name of Dickens loomed largely as the champion of freedom, in the speeches made which had as their theme the freedom of the Press ; both Mr. Sitwell in the University lecture and Sir Walter Layton in his after-dinner speech remarked on the fact that hardly one of the important novels of Dickens could be published to-day without bringing author, publisher, and printer into court for libel, and make them subject to heavy damages.

We challenge this statement. If we are wrong, perhaps some of our legal readers—and we have many—will tell us how any person considering himself to be the original of Mr. Wackford Squeers could to-day be successful in an action for libel ; or how Dickens could have been charged with contempt of Court in the matter of *Oliver Twist* or *Bleak House*.

THE ALBERT A. HOPKINS COLLECTION AT YALE

Our old and good friend, Mr. Hopkins, of New York, is deriving much pleasure from seeing others enjoy his great collection of Dickensiana which he has presented to the Library of Yale University. Although it does not contain priceless manuscripts, or first editions in parts, it is a complete reference library for Dickensians. First editions of all Dickens's works are included. The pride of Mr. Hopkins has been the extra-illustrating of *Pickwick*. This work is extended to fifteen volumes, inlaid to quarto size, and contains no less than 6,000 pages.

"Everything is there," Mr. Hopkins informs us, "even to the dullest book in the world, Townshend's 'Religious Opinions.'"

The entire collection numbers close on 1,500 items, and it is gratifying to know that such a magnificent collection is preserved for the public in this manner.

SOCIAL REFORM: A REJOINDER

By W. P. WOOLLIAMS

It was rather a curious coincidence that the summer number of *The Dickensian* contained an article by Mr. James Fisher intended show that Dickens was not a social reformer, and also a review of book by Mr. T. A. Jackson aiming to reveal him "as the staunch ampion of the common people and as a great social reformer."

Which of these is correct? Well, it depends upon what you mean "social reformer." Mr. Fisher's argument in the negative is based the fact that Dickens in his novels advocates no remedies to meet e social evils that he exposed so trenchantly. But then Dickens was novelist, not a writer on sociology, and it certainly was not his place advocate in his novels remedies for these evils.

As a novelist Dickens could legitimately include in his books an posure of the social evils of his time as part of the background of stories, but I am sure he did not do this as a mere matter of art, Mr. Fisher seems to suggest, but because he abhorred those evils d wholeheartedly desired to amend or abolish them as the case might quire.

If to expose social evils without suggesting remedies is not to be social reformer, then I do not see how Carlyle can be called one. should have thought that Ruskin was a better example of a con-uctive social reformer, for he advocated many measures of social form, not a few of which have taken their place upon the statute oks.

Where Mr. Fisher fails in his estimate of Dickens as a social reformer, think, is in not putting himself back sufficiently into the times in nich Dickens lived and the ideas which generally obtained in those nes. He says that Dickens "was all for palliatives, and relied very gely on the visionary and fleeting results of private benevolence d charitable enterprise." But how many social reformers of that ne relied on anything else than palliatives, together with private nevolence and charitable enterprise? The modern socialist move-ent was then in its infancy, and the great majority of politicians, nether progressive or otherwise, accepted capitalism as essential to e industrial system of this country, and therefore they merely sought remedy its evils by what can only be called palliatives.

Dickens was not a politician, he had other work to do (and how did it all I don't know !), but I feel sure that if he had gone into rliament he would have heartily supported the measures of reform roduced by the progressives of his time.

We know very well that Dickens' exposure of social evils did have -reaching results. In an article in *The Dickensian* for December, 36, entitled "The Lawyers of Dickens," Mr. Abe J. Goldin says: Dickens lived to see the abuses that he decried remedied. His leavours as a reformer were not in vain. The Chancery laws of Eng-d were changed during his lifetime. Prison reform began during ckens's life, and great changes were made in the penal system. The

abolishment of the imprisonment for debt was accomplished the year before Dickens died. By 1861 there were only four crimes in England for which the penalty of death was exacted." The fact of these reforms being instituted was, Mr. Goldin considers, mainly due to Dickens' "wit, courage, and industry." The reforms which Mr. Goldin mentions are, however, but a few of those for which Dickens is to be given the credit of being the instigator, or, at any rate, the inspiring force.

To say that the *Christmas Books* "epitomise the social gospel of Charles Dickens" seems to me a misapprehension of their purpose. Because Dickens showed that poor people could enjoy much happiness despite their poverty is not to say for a moment that he desired their poverty to continue. The Cratchitts and the Tetterbys were poor, very poor, but they were nevertheless cheerful because of the innate unselfishness and kindliness which enabled them to find happiness in their affection and care for one another.

Even if Dickens had held the most perfect and far-reaching social philosophy he would still have known very well that poverty must continue in his time (as it has to ours), but he showed in his novels that although poverty is a great evil, yet where there is family affection and good feeling there may be still much happiness among those condemned to endure that poverty.

That the poor believed Dickens was genuine in his professed sympathy with their hard lot is undoubted. We are told that on Christmas Day he used to receive gifts of vegetables, poultry, flowers, sent by humble folk from every corner of England.

Sir Henry Dickens, in his "Memories of My Father," says: "A very dear friend of mine told me that he happened to be in a tobacconist's shop on that day" (*i.e.* the day of his father's death). "Whilst there a working man came in for a screw of tobacco and . . . said 'Charles Dickens is dead—We have lost our best friend!'"

The fact that so large a part of Dickens's novels was concerned with the lives of poor folk, and that his descriptions of their lives was instinct with deep feeling and pity, was, the workers felt, due to no mere literary device, but came from the heart of the man.

Then he not only showed the poor how their hard lot might be alleviated, but by the innate dignity and nobility of character of many of the working class men and women he depicted, he was a strong factor in helping the workers to grow in self-respect and to take higher ideals of life and its possibilities, as I believe to have been the case since the middle of the last century.

There have been not a few writers, such as Ruskin and Charles Kingsley, who, though true friends of the poorer classes, looked upon the common people from outside as it were, not really as of them. But not so Dickens and some other writers who might be mentioned, Robert Burns in particular. One feels that they saw life from the standpoint of the workers. One need read but little of Dickens to realise that he, no less than Burns, felt that:

> "The rank is but the guinea's stamp—
> The man's the gold for a' that."

at not only are all men equal in the sight of God, that platitude meaningless in the mouths of many unctuous preachers and moralists, t that in very deed men are all of the same stuff, in spite of the idents of birth, education, and position, not only by the sorrows which we are partakers and the sins by which we are all degraded, t by the heroism, the self-sacrifice, the innate nobility of which the vliest are alike capable with the highest.

The poorer class characters which Dickens created, or many of them, ow the attitude of the novelist towards the common people he ew and loved so well; his keen eye perceived that the external ish and culture of the favourite of fortune sometimes cloaked an age of clay, while the rough, toil-worn, and often unpleasing exterior the poor man and woman might be the outer covering of a heart of d.

You may consider I have travelled somewhat far from my subject, t I do not think so, for when Jerusalem is built in "England's en and pleasant land" it will be because the ordinary men and men are worthy to dwell in it.

A VANCOUVER JUDGE ON NEWMAN NOGGS

BECAUSE he was at the very centre of all the influences for good, cause I class him as the saviour of the Nickleby family, even though was a poor, drunken clerk, the remnant of a gentleman who once le to hounds, I have chosen Newman Noggs for my study," said dge F. W. Howay, speaking to members of the Vancouver Branch the first meeting of the season in September.

His Honour, in taking Newman Noggs as the subject of a deeply mpathetic address, said that *Nicholas Nickleby* had about as much t as "Roderick Random" or "Peregrine Pickle." The plot was tty tenuous, the god in the machine appears at the right moments t, said the judge, we do not read Dickens for his plots.

"We read him, and we read his *Nicholas Nickleby* for the love of his aracters, for his Squeers, for his Kenwigs, for his Crummles, for his ntalini, his Smike, and his La Creevy."

The speaker traced the course of Newman Noggs throughout the vel, showing how the drunkard still retained some remnant of his nour, the instinct to distinguish between right and wrong which ays remains with a true gentleman. He claimed there was no more thetic picture in Dickens than that of the broken-down, despised n, wiping the tears from the eyes of Kate Nickleby after her inter- w with her Uncle Ralph.

In conclusion, he said that the great lesson of the book was to teach n their inability to judge their fellow creatures by externals.

WHO IS THIS?

(*Answers to Questions on page* 278, vol. xxxiii.)

, Jefferson Brick. 2, Paul Dombey. 3, Dr. Chillip. 4, Little rrit. 5, Dick Swiveller. 6, Miggs. 7, Dr. Blimber. 8, Vincent mmles. 9, Krook. 10, Mr. Minns. 11, Flintwinch. 12, Jaggers. Ham. 14, Mrs. Blimber. 15, Chuffey. 16, Mrs. Merdle. 17, Bob vyer. 18, Montague Tigg.

A STAGE ASIDE

DICKENS'S EARLY DRAMATIC PRODUCTIONS

IV. *THE LAMPLIGHTER.*

DICKENS'S final attempt to write for the stage—apart from work done for the amateur stage to which consideration will be given in a later article—ended in disaster.

It must have been some time in the year 1838 that Dickens promised Macready to show him a farce he was at that time writing. This may possibly have been the one he had in mind when he wrote to Harley the letter wrongly ascribed to *Is She His Wife*, to which we made reference on page 256 of the last volume.

" Believe me, that I only feel gratified and flattered by your inquiry after the farce " he wrote to Macready in the autumn of 1838, " and that if I had as much time as I have inclination, I would write on and on, farce after farce and comedy after comedy, until I wrote you something that would run." With that same letter he sent Macready a copy of *The Strange Gentleman*, saying that Harley had " acted in it for some seventy nights. It is the best thing he does. It is barely possible you may like to try it." But Macready was naturally disinclined to follow another actor in a piece of only moderate merit.

On December 5th, 1838, Dickens read *The Lamplighter* to Macready who recorded the fact in his Diary, and added " The dialogue is very good, full of point ; but I am not sure about the meagreness of the plot."

Six days later Dickens read the farce at Covent Garden Theatre in the presence of Forster, Macready and Bartley, the Stage Manager to whom it will be recalled he had once applied for a part as an actor. " There was manifest disappointment " writes Macready. " It went flatly ; a few ready laughs, but generally an even smile. . . . It was agreed that it should be put into rehearsal, and when nearly ready should be seen and judged of by Dickens."

But Dickens valiantly accepted his defeat. He wouldn't let the play go into rehearsal and wrote two days later to Macready, " I can have but one opinion on the subject—withdraw the farce at once by all means. . . . Believe me I have no other feeling of disappointment connected with this matter, but that arising from the not having been able to be of some use to you."

The play was later turned into " The Lamplighter's Story " published in 1841 in *The Pic-Nic Papers* for the benefit of Mrs. Macrone.

The play was never published during Dickens's lifetime. The manuscript is in the Forster Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and was privately printed in 1879 in an edition of 250 copies.

W. D.

IN CHRISTMAS STORY-BOOK LAND

By EDITH M. DAVIES

DURING the last twelve months, every good Dickensian—and "there ain't no sich a person" as a bad Dickensian—has, no doubt, re-read Dickens's *Christmas Books* and *Christmas Stories*, but how many have done more than this? How many have re-read the books within books and stories within stories to which Dickens constantly referred and which he knew and loved so well? If anyone has time and inclination for study, he could draw up a good list of books suggested by the many literary references in Dickens's Christmas works. The list would include books of all kinds—fiction, poetry, drama, even school text-books.

In *The Cricket on the Hearth*, Chirp the Second, Dickens begins: 'Caleb Plummer and his Blind Daughter lived all alone by themselves, and the Story-books say—and my blessing, with yours to back it, I hope, on the Story-books, for saying anything in this work-a-day world!"

What are some of these Dickensian Story-books, and what do they say?

The best, most famous story-book in the English language, and one from which Dickens continually quoted, is, of course, the Bible, and to English readers its stories are too well known to need repetition. In the Christmas works there are at least fourteen references to Biblical stories, ranging from that of Noah's ark in the Book of Genesis to the story of the healing shadow of St. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles. Stories of the life, miracles and parables of Jesus were particularly beloved by Dickens, and it is noteworthy that he invariably referred to them with the deepest reverence and admiration, never in connection with any joke, however innocent.

Another book of Eastern origin of which Dickens and several of his characters were very fond, was "The Arabian Nights' Entertainments," a collection of hundreds of Oriental stories of adventure by land and sea, love, hatred, intrigue and supernatural incidents. The stories are of Indian, Persian, Arabic, Chinese and Egyptian origin, the oldest of them dating from the eighth century, others from the tenth, and the latest probably from the sixteenth century. The framework of the book is thirteenth-century Persian and is well known. Sheherazade, a Caliph's bride under an unjust sentence of death, prolonged her life from night to night by relating the most marvellous tales to her revengeful husband. After a thousand and one nights of such entertainment, the Caliph revoked his cruel decree and they lived happily for many years "until they were visited by the Exterminator of Delights and the Separator of Companions." The first European translation of "The Arabian Nights" appeared in 1704, and was the work of Antoine Galland, a French Oriental scholar, but the translation best known to English readers is the literal one made by Sir Richard Burton (1821-1890), explorer and Orientalist. This edition, in fifteen volumes, was published from 1885-8, after Dickens's time, but there had been earlier English translations, notably E. W. Lane's (1840).

When Scrooge in his vision of Christmas Past saw himself as a lonely boy left to spend his Christmas at school and trying to forget his troubles in reading, he also saw characters from his books framed in the schoolroom window, and among them were figures from "The Arabian Nights."

In the story of *The Ghost in Master B's Room*, there is an amusing account of ten small children in a preparatory school who were so infatuated with "the Arabian Nights" that they determined "to have a Seraglio"—surely the most innocent and ideal Seraglio ever formed! In their play-time these children lived in a make-believe Eastern world of their own, all unknown to their severe school-mistress. "Miss Griffin was a model of propriety, and I am at a loss to imagine what the feelings of that virtuous woman would have been, if she had known, when she paraded us down the Hampstead Road two and two, that she was walking with a stately step at the head of Polygamy and Mahomedanism"!

Another story-book with which young Scrooge consoled himself contained the fifteenth-century tale of "Valentine and Orson," almost unknown to modern English children, but still told in France. Bellisant, princess of France and Empress of Constantinople, gave birth to twin sons in a forest near Orleans. One baby was carried off by a she-bear who suckled him with her own cubs. This boy grew up more like an animal than a man, and was feared and known as Orson (from the Latin *ursus*—a bear), "the Wild Man of the Forest." Meanwhile, the other twin, Valentine, was kidnapped by his uncle, Pepin, King of France, who brought him up as a prince at Court. Poor Bellisant, bereft of her children and divorced from her husband, the Emperor of Constantinople, was befriended by Ferragus, a Portuguese giant. Ultimately, Orson was found and reclaimed by Valentine, and after many chivalrous adventures the twins married French ladies of high rank, much to their mother's satisfaction.

Yet another book which the boy Scrooge enjoyed during that drear Christmastime was the old favourite "Robinson Crusoe," by Daniel Defoe. It is not generally known that "Robinson Crusoe" was published in three parts, and the last part, which describes Crusoe's later voyages and Friday's death, is now seldom reprinted as the interest falls off considerably. I have an idea—a purely personal opinion—that Dickens connected in mischievous fancy the incongruous figures of his wife, Robinson Crusoe and Tilly Slowboy when, in *The Cricket on the Hearth*, he wrote of Miss Slowboy's legs:

"There was a fatality about them which rendered them singularly liable to be grazed; and she never effected the smallest ascent or descent, without recording the circumstance upon them with a notch, as Robinson Crusoe marked the days upon his wooden calendar," for on the 24th April, 1842, four years previously, he had written to Forster from America:

"I say nothing of Kate's troubles—but you recollect her propensity? She falls into, or out of, every coach or boat we enter; scrapes the skin off her legs; brings great sores and swellings on her feet: chips large

ıgments out of her ankle bones; and makes herself blue with uises."

A story nearly related to Crusoe's was that of the "Adventures of ilip Quarll," first published in 1727. It tells of the adventures d sufferings in a distant land of an English hermit who, instead of a vage Man Friday, had a chimpanzee for his only companion. This le once helped to give young Dickens a nightmare, as he relates in e sketch *A Christmas Tree.*

References to popular fairy tales throughout the *Christmas Books d Stories* are numerous; in *The Haunted House* Dickens recalls th particular affection "an illustrious lady who brightened my own ildhood . . . the brilliant Mother Bunch." The original of Mother unch is difficult to discover, but the first reference to her occurs in the le of a humorous book published in 1604: "Pasquil's Jests mixed ith Mother Bunch's Merriments." Later, a series of "Mother unch's Fairy Tales" appeared, the good lady evidently acting as onsor, just as Uncle Oojah and Tiger Tim do in children's "Annuals" owadays.

When the soft-hearted Mrs. Lirriper thought of her rascally brother- -law, Joshua, imprisoned for debt, she saw in her mind's eye "a cter of him . . . dressed almost entirely in padlocks like Baron Trenck Jemmy's book." This book was probably an English translation the German "Autobiography of Baron Trenck," first published in 787; and I hope it was suitably edited before it was put in the infant mmy's hands! Baron Trenck, an Austrian born in 1711, was a ldier first in the Russian, then in the Austrian army. He had a umber of thrilling, but often disreputable, adventures, and on two casions was court-martialled and imprisoned for looting, brutality, nmorality and disobedience. In one of his periods of solitary con- nement he claimed to have tamed a spider which he taught to perform arious tricks, and Dickens thought of doing the same thing when he as snowed-up at the "Holly Tree Inn." In 1744, Trenck was ndemned to death, but the sentence was commuted to one of nprisonment for life and he died in captivity in 1749.

One would like to have known the titles of the books which the wo Idle Apprentices found in the inn at Hesket Newmarket, but idently they formed a goodly collection containing some of Dickens's d favourites, loved and remembered since his childhood. "Fielding as there, and Smollett was there, and Steele and Addison were there dispersed volumes; and there were tales of those who go down to ie sea in ships for windy nights; and there was really a choice of od books for rainy days or fine."

It will be recalled that after Thomas Idle sprained his ankle, he had to grope his way along in a doubled-up condition with the aid of vo thick sticks and was no bad embodiment of Commodore Trunnion, of one of those many gallant Admirals of the stage who have all mple fortunes, gout, thick sticks, tempers, wards and nephews." ossibly this comparison was suggested to Francis Goodchild (*i.e.* ickens) by the sight of Smollett's works in the inn, for Commodore

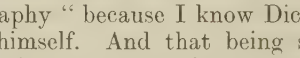
Hawser Trunnion is a character from Smollett's novel, "Peregrine Pickle." Peregrine Pickle is not a particularly admirable hero as he shows himself to be unkind, ungrateful, extravagant and inconstant. The real hero of the book to my mind, and one worthy, I consider, to stand in the front rank of great English comic characters, is Peregrine's godfather, Commodore Trunnion, a lame, one-eyed naval veteran. An inn-keeper says of him:

"He does not live like any other Christian landsman, but keeps a garrison in his house as if he were in the midst of his enemies, and makes his servants turn out in the night, watch and watch, as he calls it, all the year round. His habitation is defended by a ditch, over which he has laid a drawbridge and planted his courtyard with peteroes continually loaded with shot."

Smollett gave us the gallant Commodore and his garrison in 1751; Dickens gave us Wemmick and his Castle at Walworth in *Great Expectations* in 1861. May not the memory of Commodore Trunnion have partially inspired the creation of Wemmick?

In the hope that it may induce someone to read "Peregrine Pickle," I cannot resist adding the delightful information that when the Commodore went to church on his wedding day, he rode a horse which he steered like a ship according to the compass, "tacking about that he might not go right in the wind's eye."

I have only been able to indicate some of the story-books mentioned in *Christmas Books* and *Christmas Stories*. A complete survey of every book to which Dickens referred in these two volumes would be encyclopædic. But I hope I have given sufficient indication of yet another source of pleasure in his works. Christian Tearle, in his excellent book "Rambles with an American," states that he is so keen on Dickensian topography "because I know Dickens went over every inch of the ground himself. And that being so, when I see these places, they seem to bring me nearer him." When I, a librarian, read a book which Dickens read, enjoyed and quoted, my enjoyment is enhanced as I feel that I am being brought still nearer to the Master who enriched in such boundless measure the world's treasury of stories and books.



MR. OLIVER TWIST

A LETTER posted in Karachi, India, on the 14th June last and addressed

Mr. Oliver Twist
Necola Nicolbe Squeres
Cottage
Smur Lend Lord
London

was delivered by the Postal authorities to the Dickens Fellowship in London. It was difficult to follow the request of the writer of the letter, but it appeared to concern a grievance of the Indian gentleman concerning some land. The Hon. Secretary accordingly passed it over to the India Office, who have promised to give the matter attention.

AT THE DICKENS HOUSE

LEGAL DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE PIRACY OF *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

By S. J. RUST

EVERY reader of *The Dickensian* must be interested in the law-suit which influenced Dickens's outlook upon the administration of the Law in this country.

Its history may be epitomised thus :—

19th December, 1843.—*A Christmas Carol* was published. (The MS. was presented to Dickens's old school-fellow and solicitor, Thomas Mitton.)

6th January, 1844.—Sixteenth Number of "Parley's Illuminated Library," price 2d., was published containing the first half of "A Christmas Ghost Story re-originated from the original by Charles Dickens Esquire and analytically condensed expressly for this work."

8th January, 1844.—Dickens moved, through his solicitor, to obtain an injunction to stop this publication.

9th January, 1844.—Dickens filed his affidavit in support of the application for an interim injunction, stating *inter alia*, that in many instances his own language had been copied, but that Fezziwig had been altered to Fuzziwig.

10th January, 1844.—Injunction granted by Sir J. Knight Bruce in the Vice-Chancellor's Court.

Mr. Sergeant Talfourd appeared for Dickens, and at the close of his speech quoted from Sheridan : "You use my ideas as Gipsies do stolen children ; they steal children, disfigure them, and then make them pass for their own."

15th January, 1844.—Defendants, Richard Egan Lee and John Haddock, moved to dissolve the Injunction.

16th January, 1844.—Richard Egan Lee filed his affidavit in which he said that in 1841 he had, with his coadjutator, Mr. Henry Hewitt, "analysed, abridged, re-originated, and published the plaintiff's well known and then recently published works, *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*, and the plaintiff had never interfered with those publications. He had critically examined *A Christmas Carol*, sending his notes to Hewitt, who had made very considerable improvements, and in some instances large original additions . . . for example, in the Plaintiff's work one of the personages called "Tiny Tim" is merely described as having sung a song about a child being lost in the snow whereas in the said Henry Hewitt's said manuscript an original carol or song of sixty lines was written " . . . " So far from the said Defendants' publication being a colorable imitation of the Plaintiff's said work, this Deponent verily believes that numerous incongruities in the Plaintiff's work involving the unhinging of the whole story have been tastefully remedied in the said Henry Hewitt's work."

At the same time four other affidavits were filed on behalf of the

defendants, the most interesting of which is that of Henry Hewitt, who declared that " besides the defects or wants of harmony pointed out by Richard Egan Lee this deponent detected so many others as to induce him in numerous instances to abandon the plot of the plaintiff's tale and to substitute what this deponent verily believes to be a more artistical style of expression and of incident."

The other three affidavits are sworn by George Stiff (the illustrator), George Mudie, who claims to have been for many years chief editor of the *Sun* daily newspaper, and Edward Leman Blanchard, dramatic author and writer of works of romance and fiction.

Jaques, in his " Charles Dickens in Chancery " (Longmans, 1914), tells a good deal about this E. L. Blanchard, against whom Dickens appears to have cherished no rancour when he met him twenty years later. But we must clearly differentiate him from *Laman* Blanchard, the kindly critic and poet who terminated his own life in 1845 soon after losing his wife. Otherwise we shall start with wonder when we read ten months after this vexatious trial that Dickens asks Forster to invite for the famous reading of *The Chimes*, " Carlyle, indispensable, and I should like his wife of all things. Her judgment would be invaluable. You will ask Mac., and why not his sister ? Stanny and Jerrold I should particularly wish ; Edwin Landseer, *Blanchard*, perhaps Harness, and what do you say to Fonblanque and Fox ? "

18th January, 1844.—Vice-Chancellor Knight Bruce heard motion to dissolve the injunction, decided to continue the injunction, but promised to look into the words " and from copying or imitating the whole or any part of the plaintiff's book." Dickens was prematurely elated and wrote on this date " The pirates are beaten flat. They are bruised, bloody, smashed, squelched, and utterly undone. Knight Bruce would not hear Talfourd, but instantly gave judgment."

25th January, 1844.—The Vice-Chancellor decided that the words " or imitating " be struck out, and concluded his judgment, " therefore let the plaintiff within ten days bring an action against the defendant for the invasion of his alleged copyright and prosecute the action with due diligence."

So far the story is set forth very fully by Mr. E. Jaques in his little book " Charles Dickens in Chancery."

The documents which have recently been presented to the Dickens House take up the story from this point.

They include :—

(i) A copy of the interim injunction dated Wednesday, 10th January, 1844.

(ii) Brief instructions from Mitton to Mr. H. H. Dodgson to prepare the Declaration.

(iii) The opening part of the declaration claiming the damages of One Thousand Pounds.

(iv) A brief note dated 26th February, 1844, from Dodgson, " I am told that the Defendants appeared in the Gazette on Saturday as bankrupts. Shall I go on with the declaration ? Perhaps at all events I'd better let it stand over for a few days."

SCROOGE AND THE GOOD SPIRIT AT BOB CRATCHIT'S CHRISTMAS DINNER.

A CHRISTMAS GHOST STORY.

CONDENSED EXPRESSLY FOR THIS WORK.

Come, for you know me! I am he who sung
Of ——— the wild and wondrous tale.—SOUTHEY.

—MICKLE.

Other than want a spirit, bring a corollary.—THE TEMPEST.

Of cheerless poverty! How many shake
With all the fiercest tortures of the mind!—THE SEASONS.

And thereby hangs a tale.—A "WINTER'S TALE."

EVERYBODY, on the planet you know from the time of "Scrooge and Marley," for, strictly speaking, "long, long dead," at the period we have chosen for the commencement of our story, the name of the deceased partner was mentioned in the place where the warehouse door [illegible]

First page of the Carol Piracy

From the Collection of Mr. W. Miller

(v) A letter from Sergeant Talfourd to Thomas Mitton dated 28th February, 1844, from Abingdon.

Abingdon, 28 February 1844.

My dear Sir,

I regret that I received the altered Declaration in the case of "Dickens *v.* Lee" on the eve of my departure for the Circuit, so late, and amidst so much preparation of various matters which engaged the last moment in Town, that I could not consider the alterations *then* or communicate with you upon them. I was, therefore, obliged to bring the papers with me to this place, and to return them hence to you. I doubt whether the addition made by Mr. Dodson may not be regarded as constituting a *second count*, therefore, have to be struck out under the New Rules, and also whether it might not be regarded in Chancery hereafter as desiring another ground of action than an injunction of Copyright. I have, therefore, altered the bill by introducing the description of the Piracy in the body of the complaint; and as possibly the . . . . may not be a ground of action at Common Law, and as the partial Copy may not come within the words of the Copyright Acts, I have struck out that charge—which, indeed, is not required in this case, and will not aid in point of evidence. I should like Mr. Dodson to see the proposed alterations before they are finally adopted, and repeat that I could not call on him to explain my views and consider his before I left Town.

I hope, however, that some means may be found to deliver our friend from the penalty which will await on success—the payment of his own costs of an action against Bankrupt Robbers.

I remain,

My dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

Th Talfourd.

Thos. Mitton Esq.

The space in the middle of the letter represents five indecipherable words, which are quoted from Dodgson's altered draft.

It is interesting to note that on the two occasions when Talfourd refers to Dodgson he omits the "g," thus making him more Dickensian.

Dickens certainly suffered the "penalty which waited on success," for the action cost him £700.

Two years later, when Talfourd and others urged him to proceed against fresh "pirates," he wrote, "My feeling is that it is better to suffer a great wrong than to have recourse to a much greater wrong of the Law. I shall not easily forget the expense, and anxiety, and horrible injustice of the Carol case, wherein in asserting the plainest right on earth I was really treated as if I were the robber instead of the robbed."

THE EXTRAORDINARY GAZETTE

THREE-PAGE leaflet written by Dickens and bearing the above title with a special illustration by Phiz which we reproduce page 47 was enclosed among the advertisements of sundry period-ls during February 1837. It is considered a great rarity and much ght after by collectors.

ts purport was to advertise the novel *Oliver Twist* and it was couched language similar to that employed in a royal speech to Parliament. this item is very little known and not included in many editions Dickens's works we reprint it here in full.

EXTRAORDINARY GAZETTE

Speech of his Mightiness
on opening the second number of
BENTLEY'S MISCELLANY
Edited by "Boz."

On Wednesday, the first of February, "the House" (of Bentley) t for the despatch of business, in pursuance of the Proclamation erted by authority in all the Morning, Evening, and Weekly Papers, pointing that day for the publication of the Second Number of the scellany, edited by "Boz."

His Mightiness the Editor, in his progress to New Burlington Street, eived with the utmost affability the numerous petitions of the ssing-sweepers; and was repeatedly and loudly hailed by the men on the different stands in the line of road through which he sed. His Mightiness appeared in the highest possible spirits; l immediately after his arrival at the House, delivered himself the following most gracious speech:

My Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen:

n calling upon you to deliberate on the various important matters ch I have now to submit to your consideration, I rely with entire fidence on that spirit of good-will and kindness of which I have re than once taken occasion to express my sense; and which I am too happy to acknowledge again.

t has been the constant aim of my policy to preserve peace in your ds, and provoke merriment in your hearts; to set before you the nes and characters of real life in all their endless diversity; occa-ally (I hope) to instruct, always to amuse, and never to offend. ust I may refer you to my Pickwickian measures, already taken still in progress, in confirmation of this assurance.

n further proof of my sincere anxiety for the amusement and theartedness of the community, let me direct your particular ntion to the volume I now lay before you, which contains no fewer n twenty-one reports, of greater or less extent, from most eminent, ve, and intelligent commissioners. I cannot but anticipate that n you shall have given an attentive perusal to this general report Periodical Literature, you will be seized with an eager and becoming re to possess yourselves of all the succeeding numbers—a desire on ch too much praise and encouragement can never be bestowed.

Gentlemen of the Reviews :

I have directed the earliest copies of every monthly number to be laid before you, they shall be framed with the strictest regard to the taste and wishes of the people ; and I am confident that I may rely on your zealous and impartial co-operation in the public service.

The accounts and estimates have been made out ; and I am happy to inform you that the state of the revenue as compared with the expenditure (great as the latter has been, and must necessarily continue to be) is most satisfactory ; in fact, that a surplus of considerable extent has been already realised. It affords me much pleasure to reflect that not the smallest difficulty will arise in the appropriation of it.

My Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen :

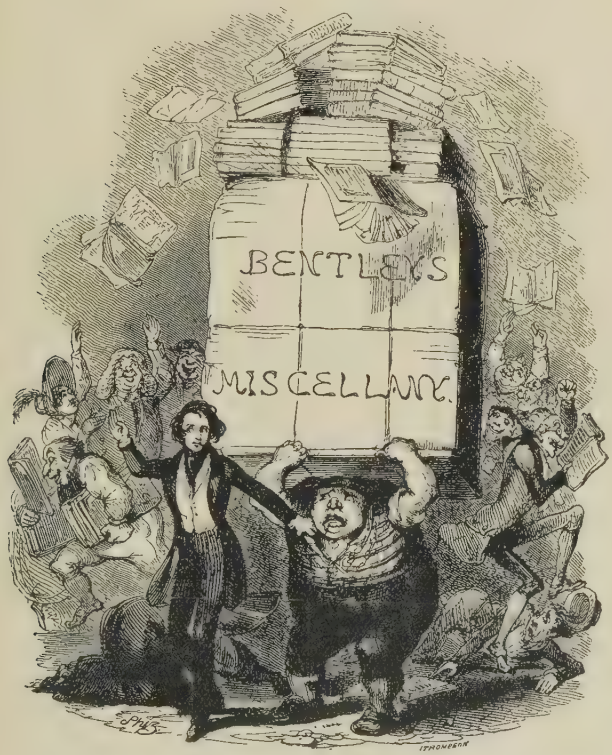
I continue to receive from Foreign Powers undeniable assurances of their disinterested regard and esteem. The free and independent States of America have done me the honour to reprint my Sketches gratuitously ; and to circulate them throughout the Possessions of the British Crown in India, without charging me anything at all. I think I shall recognise Don Carlos if I ever met him in the street ; and I am sure I shall at once know the King of the French, for I have seen him before.

I deeply lament the ferment and agitation of the public mind in Ireland, which was occasioned by the inadequate supply of the first number of this "Miscellany." I deplore the outrages which were committed by an irritated and disappointed populace on the shop of the agent ; and the violent threats which were directed against him personally on his stating his inability to comply with their exorbitant demands. I derive great satisfaction from reflecting that the promptest and most vigorous measures were instantaneously taken to repress the tumult. A large detachment of "Miscellanies" was levied and shipped with all possible despatch ; and I have it in my power to state, that, although the excitement has not yet wholly subsided, it has been, by these means, materially allayed. I have every reason to hope that the arrangements since made with my agent in the Port of Dublin render any recurrence of the disturbances extremely improbable, and will effectually prevent their breaking out afresh.

I view with heartfelt satisfaction the loyal and peaceable demeanour of the people of Scotland ; who, although they experienced a similar provocation to outrage and rebellion, were content to wait until fresh supplies could be forwarded per mail and steam.

I feel unfeigned pleasure in bearing similar testimony to the forbearing disposition and patriotic feeling of the hardy mountaineers in the Principality of Wales.

I have concluded treaties on the most advantageous terms, not only with the powers whose names are already known to you, but with others, to whom it might prove disadvantageous to the public service to make any more direct reference at present. I have laboured, and shall continue to labour, most earnestly and zealously for your pleasure and enjoyment ; and, surrounded as I am, by talent and ability, I look most confidently to your approval and support.



EXTRAORDINARY GAZETTE.

SPEECH OF HIS MIGHTINESS

ON OPENING THE SECOND NUMBER OF

BENTLEY'S MISCELLANY,

EDITED BY "BOZ."

On Wednesday, the first of February, "the House" (of Bentley) met for the despatch of business, in pursuance of the Proclamation inserted by authority in all the Morning, Evening, and Weekly Papers, appointing that day for the publication of the Second Number of the Miscellany, edited by "Boz."

Dr. THE DICKENS HOUSE. — Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st December, 1936. — Cr.

Expenditure.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
To *General Expenses*—		
Printing, Stationery, Postages, and Telephone ..	29 7 11	
Caretakers and Cleaning	80 9 6	
Petty Cash and Sundry Expenses	32 6 8	
Bank Charges	18 2	
		143 2 3
,, General and Water Rates	65 8 5	
,, Lighting and Heating	121 12 0	
,, Insurance	14 10 10	
	201 11 3	
Less Received from the Dickens Fellowship ..	15 0 0	
		186 11 3
,, Repairs and Decorations	.. ..	70 7 7
,, Interest—Mortgage	30 0 0	
Loan	10 0 0	
		40 0 0
,, Salaries	.. ..	130 0 0
,, Depreciation of Furniture and Fittings	.. ..	16 5 4
		£586 6 5

Income.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
By Annual Subscriptions	.. ..	8 8 0
,, Admission Fees	.. ..	59 17 0
,, *Rents*—		
No. 49 Doughty Street	233 3 9	
The Dickensian	35 0 0	
The Dickens Fellowship	50 0 0	
		318 3 9
,, *Adelaide H. Garland Memorial Gift*—		
Interest on £188 5s. 9d. 2½% Consolidated Stock		4 14 0
,, Profit on Sales	.. ..	85 17 8
,, Balance, being excess of Expenditure over Income for the year, carried to Equipment and Endowment Fund		109 6 0
		£586 6 5

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December, 1936.

Liabilities.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Mortgage on 49 Doughty Street	600 0 0	
Interest accrued thereon	7 10 0	
		607 10 0
Loan from The Dickens Fellowship	550 0 0	
Interest accrued thereon	10 0 0	
		560 0 0
Sundry Creditors	.. ..	89 14 4
Adelaide H. Garland Memorial Gift	.. ..	102 19 9
Equipment and Endowment Fund—		
As at 31st December, 1935	4631 0 9	
Donations	47 0 0	
	4678 0 9	
Less Excess of Expenditure over Income as per attached Account	109 6 0	
		4568 14 9
		£5928 18 10

Assets.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Freehold Property (*48 and 49 Doughty Street*) at cost		5108 5 2
Furniture and Fittings at cost, less depreciation—		
As at 31st December, 1935	304 6 9	
Additions during the year	21 0 0	
	325 6 9	
Less Depreciation	16 5 4	
		309 1 5
Library and Museum at cost—		
As at 31st December, 1935	130 3 2	
Additions during the year	6 16 0	
		136 19 2
Stock of Pictures, Postcards, China, etc.		
As certified by the Hon. Secretary		80 19 2
Adelaide H. Garland Memorial Gift Investment—		
£188 5s. 9d. 2½% Consolidated Stock, at cost (held by the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds)		102 19 9
(Market Value 31st December, 1936, £159)		
Sundry Debtors and Payments in Advance		63 3 2
Cash at Bank		115 13 5
Cash in Hand		11 17 7
		£5928 18 10

THE DICKENS HOUSE

URING the period covered by the Balance Sheet printed on the opposite page, the following donations were received :—

	£	s.	d.
Vright	0	10	0
Valter Lawrence	10	0	0
Toplis	0	5	0
Leslie C. Staples	2	2	0
omte de Suzannet	4	12	9
Harry Fife	1	1	0
Miller	1	6	0
onal Group No. 6	1	1	0
nd Mrs. E. W. Smith ..	0	2	0
Speakman	0	5	0
E. T. Ward (in memory of T. Ward)	1	1	0
R. E. Reed	0	3	0
Brumfitt	0	5	0
s Party—Miss Burr.. ..	1	12	6
Carol Singers ..	1	8	6
Geo. F. Young's List—			
mble--National Church League	1	1	0
A. W. Edwards's List—			
cture—Abbey Road Baptist Church	1	1	0
Ramble—League of Empire ..	1	1	0
Mr. Frank S. Johnson's List—			
Lecture—Twynholme Guild ..	1	1	0
Recital—Wanstead	0	10	6
Recital—Wallington	1	5	0
Mr. W. H. Lowry's List—			
Lecture—St. Andrew's Literary Society	1	11	6
Lecture—St. Augustine's Literary Society	0	10	6
Mr. J. H. Mc Nulty's List—			
Debate—Literary Societies Union	1	1	0
Miss D. L. Minard's List—			
Lecture—Leyton Branch ..	1	1	0
Mr. S. J. Rust's List—			
Lecture—Greenford	0	10	6
Nottingham Branch—			
Per Mr. and Mrs. Guest and the Misses Martin	10	4	0

he Trustees desire to acknowledge with many thanks the following s to the Museum and Library :—

sented by—	GIFT.
C. Keus	*David Copperfield*, Dutch translation.
Headmaster, Government School, Ismailia .	*A Tale of Two Cities*, in Arabic.
F. G. Blanchard . .	Three exercise books used by pupils at Shaw's Academy, 1836-1837.
s C. Radcliffe . . .	Four letters from a school-boy at Shaw's Academy, with bill and receipt from Wm. Shaw for cost of tombstone.
T. J. Bradley . . .	*The Pickwick Papers*, in 9 volumes—extra illustrated.
Albert Coates . . .	Vocal Score of the "Pickwick" Opera.
né Pictures, Ltd. . .	Film of "Scrooge."
W. J. Roffey's Estate .	Framed letter of Dickens.
n. per Mr. Walter Dexter	A Series of Agreements between Dickens and Bentley. Letters and documents relating to Chancery Action (Dickens *versus* Lee, 1844).
W. T. Whittaker . .	Letters from Mr. and Mrs. Dickens to Agent concerning letting of No. 1 Devonshire Terrace.
Squire	"The Pénang Lawyer" walking stick, presented to Dickens by Albert Smith.
E. A. Binstead . . .	Letters of Dickens to J. P. Harley and Mr. Hicks.
Buckston Browne . .	Staffordshire China figure of Ralph Nickleby, manufactured in 1839.

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HELP WANTED FOR THE DICKENS HOUSE

appeal for funds to defray the cost of redecorating 48 Doughty et met with immediate response from sixteen of the Branches at Portsmouth Conference, and the moneys so far received from them, vell as from Headquarters' Members to whom a separate appeal addressed, are acknowledged in a list printed on page 50.

ut more money still is wanted for this purpose. As a glance he Balance Sheet on page 48 will show, there was a loss of 9 on the House for the year ended in December last; £70 of this for repairs and decorations, principally on No. 49, now let to d tenants and producing revenue. Let us please clear off this £70 !

re are many readers of *The Dickensian* who, not being attached Branches, have not been applied to for a donation. To these I re a special appeal. Wherever you are, even if you have not had an opportunity of visiting the Dickens House, you must feel ride in its possession, and will readily give a small sum to keep ut of debt. Unfortunately, when the original appeal for funds urchase and endow the House was made a dozen years or more , the sum required was not forthcoming. The trustees have ever e been vainly struggling to keep the House going without making uent appeals. As you love Dickens, give generously to keep his house free from debt !

WALTER DEXTER.

CURIOUS INFORMATION

as been asked in these pages more than once, where do some of writers on Dickens get their information ? A correspondent ds us an extract from a book lately published by H. Joseph, entitled 000 Curiosities of Britain," by Egon Jameson. On page 145, the or mentions that Dickens was "an habitué of The Boot, Cromer et, near King's Cross Station, London, where we are still shown favourite chair," which would not be a curiosity at all if it were ; then we come to this really surprising piece of information; e spent the last thirteen years of his life at Gadshill Place Inn, near hester." Now we wager Mr. Jameson did not get that information "Dickensian Inns and Taverns."

OLIVER TWIST IS THE BOOK FOR THE YEAR

the session 1937-8, which coincides as nearly as possible with the enary of the publication of *Oliver Twist*, this book was chosen Conference to be the book for general reading by the Fellowship world over. It is much regretted that some branches do not rve this selection. For 1938-9 the book (chosen at the Portsmouth ference) is to be *Nicholas Nickleby*, which will then also be in its enary period. The book for special reading is always chosen well dvance, and it is once again urged that all branches act in con- ity.

FROM RECENT BOOKS

By LOUIS B. FREWER, M.A.
(Bodleian Library)

DICKENS AS A HUMORIST

"Dickens' sedate and rather green-grocery oracular prose was a excellent vehicle for poetic humour. 'Mr. Winkle, thus instructe climbed into his saddle, with about as much difficulty as he wou have experienced in getting up the side of a first-rate man-of-war he says. And that is an excellent beginning for the funny story of runaway. The inadequacy and anxious ineptitude of Mr. Winkl his small size and the large size of his horse, are realized in one strol of the poet's brushlike pen; and yet they are not realized as ugl contemptible, pitiful or alarming—which, of course, they are. Th simile, although true, is sufficiently out of date so that the situatio cannot be taken seriously. It is Dickens at his best—or rather bett than his best. . . .

"Still more amusing are those parts of the story which tell hov after the smash-up, these men were accompanied for some hours, an through a considerable series of life's involvements, by a now totall irrelevant and unnecessary and exceedingly tall horse. Don Marqu chose this chapter when asked to name his favourite piece of literar humour, and I imagine it was the insufferable intrusion of this gigant horse, dissevered from all usefulness and yet inextricably involve with his unmitigated horsefulness in everything the patient hero tried so manfully to do, which led him to rate the tale so high.

"Irvin S. Cobb has an old-school, prosy-gaited style not unlik Dickens. And if you want to taste the difference between Britis and American poetic humour, I know no better way than to compa Mr. Winkle's experience on this 'tall quadruped' with that of Irvin Cobb on a horse sixteen miles high. . . .

"I am not trying to say which of these horseback rides is funni or better, but merely what is the striking difference between ther Cobb's language is more vigorously imaginative than that of Dicken There is more of the mind's play in it, and the mind is more utterly play. Dickens, after departing from that man-of-war, only depic with a discerning pen the actual events, which are themselves funn Cobb's way of depicting the events is funny. A good part of wh Dickens writes could be inserted in a tragic account of the sar accident, it being mere graphic realism laughingly presented. Cobb laughter moulds the names he gives to things. It makes his languag as well as his experience, ludicrous.

"Latinity is another thing we learned to shun. But it is not a ve precisely bad thing, and hence not so funny. At least, I cannot into hysterics when Dickens calls an ear an 'auricular appendag although some, I believe, have done so.

"Don Marquis thinks Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* the most delight of all classic humour, but Mark Twain confided to his diary: 'I ha no sense of humour. In illustration of this fact I will say—by way confession—that if there is a humorous passage in the *Pickwick Pap* I have never been able to find it.'"—"Enjoyment of Laughter," Max Eastman. (Hamish Hamilton.)

* * * * *

VICTORIAN ENGLAND

" What went on in the worst type of these schools has been depicted Dickens in Dotheboys Hall. In order to make his picture accurate, purposely went to Yorkshire with his illustrator, and arranged to ve himself introduced by letter to Mr. Shaw, the original of Mr. ueers, as a parent with a child to send. In spite of his precautions did not manage to penetrate into the school, Mr. Shaw being too ry to admit visitors. But Dickens gathered sufficient from his erview with Shaw and from the neighbours' accounts to give an curate picture of these schools.

" Proof that his account did not exaggerate is the evidence given a case when Shaw was prosecuted by the parents of a pupil who had ne blind through ill-treatment and neglect. The case was tried in 23, and the schoolmaster was mulcted of heavy damages ; yet some teen years later Dickens found this same man still running a school the old lines and actually getting pupils. Unless we are to assume at the parents of the wretched children were utterly lacking in rental affection, we must suppose that the case was only reported the local papers.

" The trial, Jones *versus* Shaw, took place at the Court of Common eas, London, on October 30th, 1823.

" Everyone will remember how in *Oliver Twist* Fagin has a regular ademy for teaching children to steal. This is not fiction, but fact. muel Wilderspin, a philanthropic Quaker, writes : ' It is said that the year 1819 the number of boys in London alone who procured a nsiderable part of their substance by pocket-picking and thieving every possible form was estimated at from eleven to fifteen hundred. ne man (who lived in Wentworth Road, near Spitalfields) had forty ys in training to steal and pick pockets, who were paid for their ertions with a part of the plunder. Fortunately, however, this table tutor of thieves was himself convicted of theft and trans- rted. . . .'

" We come next to ' Oliver Twiss,' by Bos ; a kind of silly copy of z's admirable tale. The only amusing point of it is an advertisement the publisher, calling upon the public to buy ' Lloyd's edition of Oliver Twiss," by Bos, it being the *only genuine one*.' By which we rn that there are thieves, and other thieves who steal from the first eves. . . .

' This sort of piracy, besides the unauthorised dramatisation of his rk, was so common that Dickens considered bringing an action, was advised not to interfere, as it was such excellent advertisement."

" When Victoria Began to Reign," by Margaret Lambert. (Faber.)

* * * * *

WASHINGTON IRVING

' Charles Dickens visited Baltimore twice, once in 1842 and again 1868. The days of his first visit there, he declared, ' were amongst most memorable of my life.' ' This was not because, as he said, rnum's ' was the most comfortable of all the hotels of which I have l any experience in the United States,' and the only hotel there in ch he was given ' enough water to wash himself ' ; but rather ause of the meeting there of himself and Washington Irving, at a e when they were the two outstanding figures among contemporary ters in English. Each was at the zenith of his achievement and

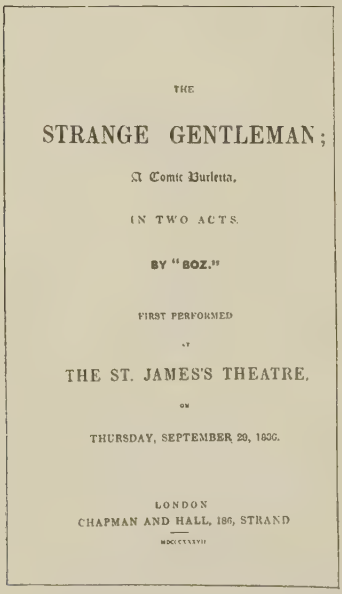
fame. Dickens recalled the charming details of this visit in this letter written just after his second visit to Baltimore :—

"Your reference to my dear friend Washington Irving renews the vivid impressions reawakened in my mind at Baltimore the other day. I saw his fine face for the last time in that city. He came thence from New York to pass a day or two with me before I went westward, and they were made amongst the most memorable of my life by his delightful fancy and general humour. Some unknown admirer of his books and mine sent to the hotel a most enormous mint-julep, wreathed with flowers. We sat, one on either side of it, with great solemnity (it filled a respectable-sized round table), but the solemnity was of very short duration. It was quite an enchanted julep and carried us among innumerable people and places that we both knew. The julep held out far into the night, and my memory never saw him afterwards otherwise than as bending over it with his straw, with an attempted air of gravity, after some anecdote involving some wonderfully droll and delicate observations of character, and then, as his eye caught mine, melting out into that captivating laugh of his which was the brightest and best I ever heard."—"Tidewater Maryland," by P. Wilstach. (Bobbs-Merrill.)

* * * * *

YORKSHIRE

". . . Easthorpe Hall, near Malton, which Carr built. The house was at one time the home of Mr. Charles Smithson, a friend of Charles Dickens. Here it was that the famous novelist penned some of the chapters of *Martin Chuzzlewit*."—"Georgian York," by R. G. Heape. (Methuen.)


THE

STRANGE GENTLEMAN;

A Comic Burletta,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY "BOZ."

FIRST PERFORMED

AT

THE ST. JAMES'S THEATRE,

ON

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1836.

LONDON
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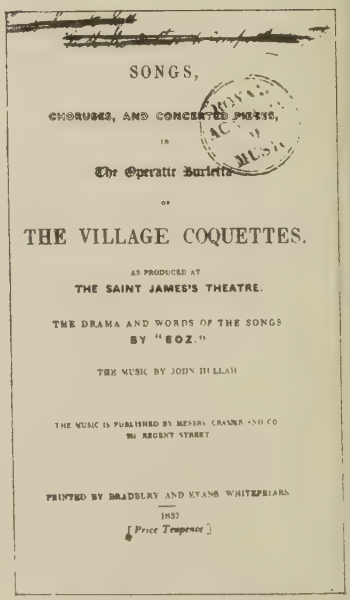

SONGS,

CHORUSES, AND CONCERTED PIECES,

IN

The Operatic Burletta

OF

THE VILLAGE COQUETTES.

AS PRODUCED AT

THE SAINT JAMES'S THEATRE.

THE DRAMA AND WORDS OF THE SONGS
BY "BOZ."

THE MUSIC BY JOHN HULLAH

THE MUSIC IS PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. CRAMER AND CO
201 REGENT STREET

PRINTED BY BRADBURY AND EVANS, WHITEFRIARS

1837

[Price Twopence.]

Covers of the two plays by Dickens first produced in 1836, but not published until 1837

HE INFLUENCE OF DICKENS ON THE CONTEMPORARY STAGE

By A. E. BROOKES CROSS

I.

NY enthusiast interested in the development of the Drama will find much valuable information in the critical survey by Dr. nest Reynolds entitled "Early Victorian Drama."* It is true t the period covered is only forty years, but it was a period n in change and of supreme importance to the dramatic stage; a iod which saw the extension of privilege to the hitherto illegitimate atres, a more realistic style of acting and of scenic representation n had previously prevailed, an improvement in accommodation, l an advancement in the status of both actor and dramatist as well in cultural conditions. The book's interest to Dickensians is that mbraces the era of Dickens throughout his adolescence and man- od. There are inevitably a number of references to Dickens's nection with, and contributions to, the stage. The volume is iously documented, and the amount and quality of research, the ence of which is incorporated therein, is amazing. The bibliography l the two appendices, one, listing many of the plays adapted from vels of the time, the other, giving brief biographies of the prominent ors, are an important feature of the book. The volume, which is y indexed, is an invaluable addition to the shelves of all serious dents of the Theatre.

The perusal of this survey prompted the speculation as to whether kens as playwright, amateur actor, or stage manager contributed thing of lasting value to the Theatre, and the desire to re-examine available evidence for and against such proposition has resulted in following personal impressions.

II.

The period from the adolescence of Charles Dickens to the date of death was one of vital importance to the Theatre and all pertaining reto.

Prior to 1830 the Theatre had fallen into a deplorable condition for ny reasons, detailed consideration of which is outside the scope of s article, but it will suffice for a grasp of the subject in its relation Dickens to mention a few of the salient features that had contri- ed to the downfall of the stage, chief among which was the disastrous luence of the patent theatres. The patent, or major, theatres were Theatres Royal, Drury Lane, and Covent Garden, which under existing law were the only London theatres—with the exception the Haymarket where for a time a temporary or seasonal licence ained—at which legitimate drama might be performed. "Legiti- te drama or 'play proper' included Shakespeare, Beaumont,

* "Early Victorian Drama, 1830—1870." Ernest Reynolds, Ph.D. Heffer and Sons, , Cambridge. 1937.

Fletcher, Congreve, Otway, and other old dramatists, but in practice it was difficult to say where the line was to be drawn."*

As the result of this monopoly there had sprung up numerous "minor," or private theatres as Dickens called them; that is, unlicensed theatres, halls, assembly rooms, and saloons attached to taverns at which were presented pantomime of the kind then in vogue extravaganza, farce, spectacle, and, finally, "that peculiar and indefinable dramatic type called the burletta, construed at this period as an eccentric (generally burlesque) musical farce."†

Owing, however, to a ruling given by the Licenser of Plays that a burletta must be defined as a play of three acts including not less than five songs, "burletta" became the thing of the moment, and it became possible to play "Macbeth" and "The School for Scandal" by arranging them into three acts and adding the requisite songs—their irrelevance being of no serious consequence. Here was a field for the minor theatres. The situation ultimately became so strained that in 1843 an Act was passed giving these theatres release from their restrictions.

The conflict was raging and ultimate victory secured before Dickens was thirty-two years of age, and it was in consequence of the limitations existing in 1836 that *The Village Coquettes* took the form it did.

During the period under review gas for the illumination of the stage and the auditorium was introduced. Its use gradually extended from the important theatres downwards, with many and far-reaching results, enabling producers to realise effects hitherto only dreamed of. As regards setting and costuming much had been accomplished by Macklin and Garrick, and from 1760 onwards we meet with attempts "on the part of one manager and another to secure historical accuracy in costume,"† but a declamatory and stilted style of acting prevailed, particularly in legitimate drama, throughout the whole of the Dickens period and afterwards. One has only to recall the Crummles troupe; the description of "Macbeth" in *Dullborough Town*; Mr. Wopsle's Hamlet; and numerous other pen-pictures scattered through the works and public speeches of Dickens himself, to realise these conditions and how they appealed to his sense of the ludicrous.

About farce, of which there was a great vogue, little need be said except that the plots and situations were crude, the humour broad, and that more depended upon the characteristics and personality of the chief performer than upon the merits of the play.

So far as the audiences at the minor theatres are concerned, we must not overlook the type of persons for whom they catered. "Pugilism, cock and dog-fighting, even public executions, formed the most popular kinds of entertainment. Sensation and excitement of the crudest kind the people wanted" combined with "cheap, false, and easily evoked pathos. . . . The contemporary theatre reflects this primitive taste and vulgar mentality,"* which Dickens himself has picturesquely described

* The Actor in Dickens. J. B. van Amerongen.
† The English Stage. Allardyce Nicoll.

" Two views of a cheap Theatre " (*The Uncommercial Traveller*), Private Theatres " (*Sketches by Boz*), and " Amusements of the ople " (*Miscellaneous Papers*).

No cause for surprise then that the art of playwriting had sunk to e lowest depths in the early years of the nineteenth century, or that e profession of acting, outside the orbit of the Patent Theatres, was a level with the general condition and the actor rated as little tter than a mountebank or vagabond. It was not until the later ars of Dickens that any appreciable improvement became noticeable.

III.

Such, then, was the background in 1836 when Dickens essayed amatic authorship with his first play, *The Strange Gentleman*, scribed as a comic burletta. This was followed after a short run by operatic burletta, *The Village Coquettes*, in the same year. The next amatic venture by Dickens was *Is She His Wife?* The dialogue in ese plays is of a primitive kind, but as an indication of the current luation of dialogue a contemporary comment on *The Village Coquettes* illuminating : " A sparkling dialogue would be inappropriate." That ickens himself shared this view is evident from his dedication to arley (the chief comedian), " that the libretto for opera must be, to certain extent, a mere vehicle for the music, and that it is scarcely ir or reasonable to judge it by those strict rules of criticism hich would be justly applicable to a five-act tragedy or a finished medy."

It is a curious reflection, as Mr. van Amerongen has aptly pointed out, at Dickens had a strong contempt for opera as a form of dramatic ntertainment and ridiculed it on many occasions.

Within the next two years Dickens wrote *The Lamplighter* for acready, but it was never presented in public. Macready, in his *Diaries*, records that " the dialogue is very good and full of point, ut feels uncertain about the meagreness of the plot," an opinion which dair Fitzgerald confirms in these words : " It is not a brilliant affair, nd, in any case, it is badly constructed and has too many scenes."* his farce completes the tale of Dickens's unaided efforts as a playwright, nd it is perplexing that, on such slender dramatic output and the uotation of a few isolated passages, Fitzgerald, in the volume already uoted, should express the opinion that Dickens possessed " the two ualifications of a dramatist, the power of presenting character and nstruction."

The contemporary reviews of *The Village Coquettes*, the most nportant of Dickens's dramatic works of the period, have already een dealt with in these pages.† Many of them were drastic in their iticism and cut up the piece savagely. It is true that " Bell's Life London," in which some of the *Sketches* had been published wrote no English musical piece equal to *The Village Coquettes* has appeared nce ' The Duenna.' " The operative word here appears to be the

* Dickens and the Drama. S. J. Adair Fitzgerald.
† Dickens's correspondence with John Hullah. *The Dickensian*, 1934, page 17.

word musical ! Moreover, when we read that in 1843 a considerable sum of money was offered for an original English comedy and that the best of one hundred plays was but an indifferent one, it must be admitted that the standard of competition was far from high.

That Dickens himself at a very early stage was under no vain illusion as to the value of his literary work for the Theatre is borne out in a frequently quoted letter written five years later to R. H. Horne, in which he said : " Let the opera sink into its native obscurity. I did it in a fit of d –ble good nature long ago for Hullah, who wrote some very pretty music to it. I just put down for everybody what everybody at the St. James's Theatre wanted to say and do, and I have been most sincerely repentant ever since."

To complete the tale of Dickens's contributions to stage literature it will be sufficient to refer to *Mr. Nightingale's Diary*, written in collaboration with Mark Lemon (1851) and acted by the " Splendid Strollers," and *No Thoroughfare*, adapted from the story of the same name in collaboration with Wilkie Collins (1861).

The latter drama was performed at the Adelphi Theatre by a strong cast headed by Fechter. That Dickens did quite a lot to Collins's play, *The Frozen Deep*, is clear from a note on the original MS. " corrected copy of *The Frozen Deep*, a drama in three acts by Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens, not published, 1866," while the accompanying facsimile of a page from the prompt book of the play now in the British Museum substantiates this.

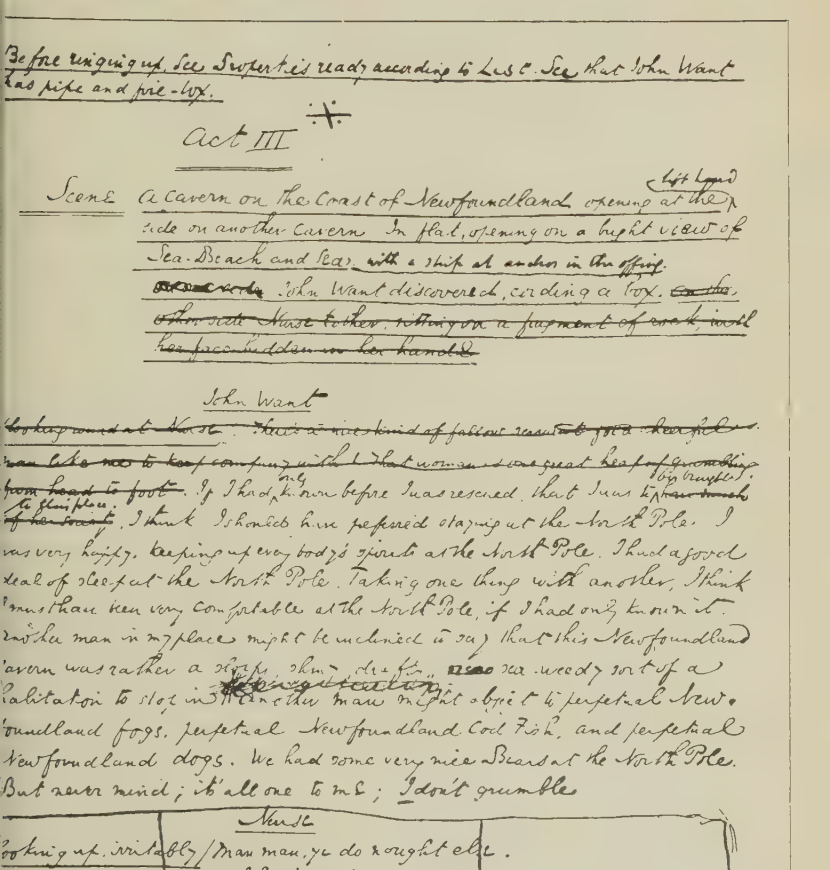
In considering Dickens's contribution to drama it will be wise to omit these later spasmodic partnerships and confine attention to the unfettered work he produced between 1836 and 1838. It has been said that had he devoted his talents to the art of playwriting he might have become a successful dramatist in extravaganza or burlesque. This it is permissible to doubt, as the only works of the kind upon which to form judgment do not approach within measurable distance of those of W. S. Gilbert, for instance.

The argument that the remuneration offered in those days was too meagre to attract him cannot be regarded seriously, for while it *is* a fact that he received only £30 for the full rights of the *Coquettes*—little more than he was receiving at the time for a single number of *Pickwick* —it is safe to hazard the guess that in the then barren state of dramatic literature, those interested would scarcely have missed the opportunity of securing the work of a rising and famous novelist on his own terms.

It is no service to Dickens to suggest that he might have succeeded as a dramatist on the shewing of his early attempts. No gloss will hide the fact that " there is no proof whatever that he (Dickens) could write a complete and well constructed play " ; * an opinion with which any unprejudiced judge is in honour bound to concur. While making every allowance for Dickens as a dramatist—the cheerless aspect of the stage, his comparative youth, his enthusiasm encouraged by his early success as a new force in literature—his love of the

* The Actor in Dickens. J. B. van Amerongen.

ramatic was too highly coloured by the playgoing experience of his oung and impressionable age.



Before raising up, See Superter is ready according to Lest. See that John Want has pipe and pipe-box.

Act III

Scene A cavern on the Coast of Newfoundland, opening at the 1st Land side on another Cavern. In flat, opening on a bright view of Sea. Beach and Sea, with a ship at anchor in the offing. John Want discovered, carding a box. ~~On the other side Nurse taken, sitting on a fragment of rock, with her face concealed in her handkerchief~~

John Want

~~Looking round at Nurse. What a nice kind of fellow I am to get a headache from head to foot. If I had known before I was rescued that I was to have much of the pleasure of~~ (by Angels). I think I should have preferred staying at the North Pole. I was very happy, keeping up everybody's spirits at the North Pole. I had a good deal of sleep at the North Pole. Taking one thing with another, I think I must have been very comfortable at the North Pole, if I had only known it. And the man in my place might be inclined to say that this Newfoundland cavern was rather a dreary, chilly, draughty sea-weedy sort of a habitation to stop in. Another man might object to perpetual Newfoundland fogs, perpetual Newfoundland Cod Fish, and perpetual Newfoundland dogs. We had some very nice Bears at the North Pole. But never mind; it's all one to me; I don't grumble

Nurse

Looking up, irritably. Man man, ye do nought else.

John Want

Nothing else but grumble? Is this unjust old woman joking? I grumble! Who ever heard a word of complaint issue from my lips? Who ever saw a sour look on my face?

Nurse

Face! Dyi ca' yon skelpit thing o' th' top o' your shoulders a face, fause but

A page of "The Frozen Deep"—see opposite page

Sentimentality and exaggeration were the most striking traits of he drama which he had assimilated during his salad days, though in is later days he often derided them. Nevertheless, with this limited xperience he dashed into this new venture with more fervour than

discretion. In maturer years, when his early exuberance had become tempered by experience, he might have risen to comedy in the Tom Robertson vein—" Caste," for instance, has aspects and characters definitely Dickensian—but the fact remains that he did not. There certainly was a market for good melodrama such as Boucicault exploited, but the lovers of Dickens—genius of Victorian fiction—would surely not wish his works to have been no greater than those.

Playwriting regarded as an art and a social force appears to have been outside his conception—certainly at the time of his early ventures in this direction and we have little evidence that his ideas on the subject developed to any appreciable extent. Drama has been recognised by its greatest exponents as a potential power which in the hands of a master of craft may be used as an instrument for lasting good; as a mirror of the customs and manners of the times; as a shaft pointed by biting satire or mockery at social abuses; as a medium for the education, in its highest sense, of the people; or, indeed, for any of the purposes which Ibsen, Shaw, Pinero, Barrie, or Maugham, each in his own degree, have successfully and forcibly demonstrated.

Such possibilities of the drama were not within the range of Dickens's vision. Beyond his expressed desire for the provision of more wholesome entertainment for the masses and his profound belief in the Theatre as an important contribution to " the lives of the common people,"* there is little indication either in the accomplishment or promise of his dramatic efforts that he rated the Theatre as other than a medium for the performance of classic or oratorical drama or as a place of amusement—a shade higher perhaps than the circus.

As Dr. Reynolds truly says, " Drama more than any other literary form, needs a constant reinforcement of vitality. Hence the danger of relying on models of the past for inspiration," and hence Dickens failed; what he wrote was within the narrow convention of his period; what Ibsen and Shaw have written is outside theirs. Even within the limits of his own restricted outlook on the stage his work was mediocre. It is, however, but elementary justice to remark that Dickens very quickly recognised the fact and he never wrote more to the purpose than when, in the letter already quoted, he penned the words, " I would not repeat them for a thousand pounds and devoutly wish them to be forgotten "; nor acted with more circumspection than when he abandoned his efforts and devoted his talent solely to the craft of novelist, in which he was and still is supreme.

IV.

Dickens in the capacity of impersonator and stage manager appears in a much more favourable light than in that of playwright.

It is on record that at one time he contemplated the stage as a career, but not very earnestly, perhaps, as an attack of catarrh blasted his hopes and he never reopened the subject. That some time or another, in his youth, " he went on " in the minor theatres is not

* " Two Views of a Cheap Theatre." *The Uncommercial Traveller.*

olly conjectural,* and that he had in him the making of a great or appears, if one may accept the opinion of contemporaries best alified to judge, to be firmly established. The subject has best ntilated so often and so voluminously that it would be supererogatory traverse the ground again, but it may be pertinent to quote, as example, the words of Justin McCarthy that "if he (Dickens) d chosen to make the stage his career, he would have ranked among greatest of actors,"† while Mr. van Amerongen has said that aking a review of his activities as an actor, we find that he had an ecially strong relish for farce, in which, as has been observed, thews was his model," but adds that "when he appeared in more ious parts, he reminded his critics strongly of the great French or Frédéric Lemaitre in his best days."

If no other evidence were forthcoming, the reputation he created by dramatic force he displayed in his public readings would itself be ficient to substantiate his claim to be considered among the most nous impersonators of his time, but had he attained the fame of rrick or even Macready his reputation would have been as unsub-ntial as theirs, with little to preserve it but memory, which fades; dition which falsifies; and written contemporary appreciation; no lumes on the shelves of our libraries and our homes to constitute a rmanent memorial and ever-present record of genius that remains ve from generation to generation.

As an amateur stage manager he produced a number of plays with rked success. His achievements in this direction included "Every n in his Humour" at the Royalty and St. James's Theatres in 1845, d at Manchester, Liverpool, and the Haymarket in 1847, while in 48 he did "The Merry Wives" in London and the big cities. It s after a performance at Knebworth (Lord Lytton's seat) that his ject to raise funds for the Guild of Literature and Art was launched, d after the opening performance before Queen Victoria in 1851 the npany of "Splendid Strollers" went "on tour" to various towns Great Britain. The plays presented were "Not so Bad as we Seem" ytton), "Mr. Nightingale's Diary" (Lemon and Dickens), "Used " (Mathews). The amount realised by this tour was about £2,500. Later he produced and acted in "The Lighthouse" and "The Frozen ep," by Wilkie Collins, both of which were subsequently transferred the regular stage. Collins stated that Dickens electrified the liences in London and Manchester.

That he took the liveliest interest in every detail of production and ained accuracy in costume and setting as far as possible is common owledge; "he was the soul of everything, was stage manager, often ge carpenter, scene arranger, property man, prompter, and band-ster."‡ At rehearsal "Charles Dickens (was) ever present, superin-ding, directing with sleepless activity and vigilance."§ He engaged inent artists, scenic and otherwise, to paint his scenery and act-drop.

* Introduction to "Letters of Charles Dickens to Mark Lemon." Walter Dexter.
† Dickens and the Drama. Adair Fitzgerald. ‡ Life of Charles Dickens. Forster.
§ Recollections of Writers. Mrs. Cowden Clark.

All this is history and has been fully dealt with by Forster ar subsequent biographers. No need then for further elaboration now sufficient to recall these activities and then to consider their significan in connection with the history of the stage. It would be absurd t suggest that Dickens's few productions began a new epoch in sta representation. Charles Kean (who was contemporaneous wi Dickens) and others before him, had made strenuous efforts towar realism and accuracy. However, it is a reasonable assumption th the thoroughness of Dickens's productions which drew large audienc from all classes of provincial society, must have attracted the attenti of the more ambitious spirits of the theatrical profession and stimulat them into activity of a similar character.

To appreciate fully the significance of this achievement it must b realised that it was not the custom at this period for complete an permanent theatrical companies to "tour" the "Provinces" wi one play, although there were a number of circuits—as they were calle —in which troupes of performers travelled from place to place, stayi for various periods—days or weeks. The Crummles company furnis a realistic picture of a minor troupe of the kind, while at the botto of the scale were the travelling show people (Richardsons, for example who performed on fair-grounds, and a little higher the "barnstormers, who played where they could, in fourth-rate theatres, town halls, co exchanges, and more specifically in barns. The programmes usuall comprised blood-curdling melodrama, Shakespeare cut or embellishe *ad hoc* drama, and extempore songs and ballets.

In important transpontine and provincial theatres it was customa to maintain a "stock" company of actors capable of performing very short notice all the legitimate plays augmented from time to tim by a specially engaged "star" actor for a number of nights or a sho season, the plays selected being of his (or her) choice. Such perfor ances were, except for the leading part, by their nature somewhat rou and ready; in the idiom of the stage the company "supported t star," who alone, in his estimation and that of the public, mattere

Contrast these play-acting methods with that inaugurated, more less fortuitously, by Dickens, who, travelling with a team of talent and famous players, presented an ensemble rarely seen or approach in those days outside the important theatres of the metropolis. T tour of Dickens's amateur company is believed to be the first instan of a company touring with a complete play. "The accepted origin the 'Caste' venture of 1867" says Dr. Reynolds, adding "'Not Bad As We Seem,' however, went the round of all the northern a midland towns sixteen years earlier."

This then is Dickens's real and abiding contribution to the sta one which undoubtedly left its impress on the dramatic outlook the time and, without making any extravagant claim, it may wi confidence be asserted that by the success of his experiment established a precedent which eventually enhanced the prestige the theatre and the dignity of the theatrical profession in their relati to provincial audiences.

IN THE HIGHLANDS—1841

By LEWIS SPENCE

HE immediate and extraordinary response in Scotland to the deep humanity and originality revealed in the work of Dickens s scarcely equalled anywhere. From the first, Scotland took him her heart, and Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, and Perth more than one occasion fêted him as they had never before honoured stranger penman. It is not of his reading tours and the king personalities he encountered during his more famous Scottish its that it seems fitting to speak here, but more particularly of way in which his vivid and generous spirit reacted to the scenes l experiences of our Highlands.

Superficially, it would seem that no man was natively less designed appreciate the environment of " purple glen and furious spate " n the wizard of Old Cockaigne, whose steps fell more happily in tle Britain and Clerkenwell than on moorland, but the romantic hin him, though predominantly a Londoner, was also a Celt, and ough he sighs in his Highland letters for the convivial delights of vonshire Terrace and his cronies, Macready and Forster, he was ll extraordinarily alert to the beauty and majesty of the environment which he found himself.

On his first Scottish visit in July, 1841, the party consisted of the velist, his wife, and one Angus Fletcher, as friend and guide, a quasi-Highlander " and eccentric whom Dickens dubbed " Mr. Kindart," a man of peculiar and whimsical genius, addicted to free-and-sy intercourse with all and sundry, and a victim of those " screaming ghtmares " characteristic of the neurasthenic. The route followed s by way of Stirling to Callander, Loch Earn, Killin, the Black ount, Glencoe, Loch Leven, Dalmally, back through Glencoe, then Inveraray, Oban, and so to Glasgow, whence he visited Melrose d Abbotsford.

" Boz " reached Lochearnhead drenched to the skin, after spending e previous night at Stewart's Hotel, nine miles out from Callander, nence he drove through the Trossachs and saw Loch Katrine. Mrs. ckens was left by the lochside with a footman holding an umbrella er her, while Dickens and Fletcher enjoyed the view from the heights the drenching rain, and found it " a glorious scene." Of the inn at chearnhead he wrote that " it looks like a white wall with windows it by mistake." There is no room in any Highland bedroom for one er he has taken his boots off, no basin that will " hold my face," d the dwellings on the route are " wretched beyond description." The food, however, is excellent—oatcakes, mutton, hotch-potch, h trout and whiskey, of which he sometimes drank a pint a day ! t in the prevailing " softness " the liquor, he says, had " no more ect than water. "

The scenery appealed to him as " stupendous," " the deep glens, e high rocks, the rushing waterfalls, and the roaring rivers down deep gulfs below," and from Ballachulish he writes with much

impressiveness of Glencoe. It was a bad summer, and the cold was " intense," yet he walked with Fletcher from Killin to the Falls of Tummel, and then drove " 50 or 60 miles through the bleakest part of Scotland " over the Black Mount and by King's House to Glencoe. " Glencoe itself," he writes, " is perfectly *terrible*. The scores of glens which abut on it form such haunts as you might imagine yourself wandering in in the very height and madness of a fever. They will live in my dreams for years—I was going to say as long as I live, and I seriously think so. The very recollection of them makes me shudder. They really are fearful in their grandeur and amazing solitude. Wales is a mere toy compared with them."

They came to rest in " a bare white house " on the banks of Loch Leven, where " a most infernal piper " practised under the window. Here Dickens sent a servant maid for a pint of sherry and nutmeg to make negus. " Now what are you to order ? " he asked. Staring at him bucolically, she answered : " Juist plenty of *nutbergs*."

Through Glencoe he had perforce to retrace his way. The sea was too rough to permit of passage across the two ferries one had then to take to reach Oban from Ballachulish, so the party drove back five-and-thirty miles through Glencoe and Innerouran to Tyndrum and Dalmally, on the road to Inveraray. At Dalmally they put up. The rain had so swelled the Coe at King's House that the travellers were forced to leave the conveyance and cross by a crazy temporary bridge of logs, while the carriage essayed the passage at an unfavourable ford. The chaise whirled in the flood like a straw, and horses and driver were nearly drowned, but succeeded after titanic efforts in gaining the shore. When at last they reached the inn, it was to find it " a place of outhouses " peopled by fifty Highlanders, all dead drunk. They had been driven there by stress of weather, and had taken advantage of the occasion to celebrate.

Dickens enjoyed Inveraray, declined a public banquet at Glasgow and revered Abbotsford. Many times later was he welcomed in Scotland, but never again was he to visit the Highlands proper. It was from a shop-sign in Dundee that he picked up the name Chuzzlewit in one or other of its early forms—Sweezleden, or Chuzzletoe, or so he informed the writer's grandfather, then editor of a newspaper in Dundee, with which town he was not happily impressed. He considered the people somewhat lacking in taste and intelligence, and remarked on the absence of old churches, the modern buildings seeming to him painfully commonplace. The old kirks, he was informed, had mostly been destroyed by General Monk, the Cromwellian leader. " Oh, for another General Monk," sighed Dickens. It is difficult, however, to comprehend the grounds of his distaste for the beautiful and venerable Old Steeple.

An aged relative, long passed away, recalled to me her vivid impressions of Dickens at her house in Dundee. Of Thackeray she remembered little more than that he was morose. But a couple of hours of the brilliant and sparkling " Boz " remained as an imperishable experience. " He was a very fountain of mirth, bonhomie and surprising anecdote,"

(*Continued at foot of next page*)

HE SUPPRESSED LETTER RESPECTING "GRIMALDI"

E have already given our readers a copy of the agreement Dickens made with Bentley for the editing of the "Memoirs of naldi"* and Forster tells us that with the exception of the preface, xens "did not write a line of this biography, such modifications dditions as he made having been dictated by him to his father; m I found often in exalted enjoyment of his office of amanuensis." was published early in 1838 and within a week seventeen hundred es of the book were sold; and "the demand increases daily" (these Dickens's own words).

here were several adverse criticisms of the book, one in particular, Forster informs us, was that Dickens was not competent to handle subject as he had never seen Grimaldi. "To this last objection was moved to reply," continues Forster, "and had prepared a er for the Miscellany 'from Editor to Sub-Editor' which it was ught best to suppress." Forster then supplies the opening part he "letter" in the hope that it "may now be not unamusing." original is in the Forster Collection at the Victoria and Albert seum, and is now printed in full for the first time.

CONCERNING GRIMALDI

A letter from the Editor
to the Sub-Editor.

Iy Dear Sir,

I understand that a gentleman unknown is going about his town privately informing all ladies and gentlemen of discon-ented natures, that, on a comparison of dates and putting together f many little circumstances which occur to his great sagacity, he as made the profound discovery that I can never have seen Grimaldi hose life I have edited, and that his biography must therefore and onsequently and of necessity be bad. Now, sir, although I was rought up from remote country parts in the dark ages of 1819 nd 1820 to behold the splendour of Christmas pantomimes and he humour of Joe, in whose honour I am informed I clapped my ands with great precocity, and although I even saw him act in the emote times of 1823; yet as I had not then aspired to the dignity f a tail-coat, though forced by a relentless parent into my first air of boots, I am willing, with the view of saving this honest entleman further time and trouble, to concede that I had not rrived at man's estate when Grimaldi left the stage, and that my ecollections of his acting, are, to my loss, but shadowy and imperfect. Vhich confession I now make publicly, and without mental qualifica-on or reserve, to all whom it may concern. But the deduction of

ontinued from page 64)

would say. "Every word sparkled, and one was left with the ression that Charles Dickens was an angel, a genius, and a great tleman."

* See *The Dickensian*, 1935, p. 250.

this pleasant gentleman that therefore the biography must b necessarily bad, I must take leave through you to deny. Althoug upon the question of fact I leave the public to decide between u I never heard it established as a sound positive before, that to writ a biography of a man (having genuine materials) or to edit his ow notes it is essential you should have known him. I am not awar that either Hazlitt or Scott was on terms of close intimacy wit Napoleon Bonaparte, or ever saw him in action, neither do apprehend that Lord Braybrooke had more than a very sligh acquaintance with Mr. Pepys whose memoirs he edited two centuri after he died, or that Plutarch had a personal knowledge of all th gentlemen whose lives he wrote, or that Dr. Johnson was on visitin terms with the Earl of Rochester, or in short that any author sittin himself down to a similar task has felt himself bound, or bee considered bound to prove, speaking literally, his familiar acquain ance with his subject.

Do sir make a corner for this letter, so that my small wor may find its way where this merry gentleman found his.

Your faithful colleague to demand

Boz.

PRELUDE TO GEORGIAN ADVENTURE*

Another Douglas Jerrold ! This one was born in 1893, great grandchil of two of Dickens's close friends, Douglas Jerrold and Laman Blanchard Born in the Edwardian period, with memories closely surroundin him of the great Victorians, he has lived his full life in the perio which has given him the title for his first autobiography ; we sa " first " because being in the early forties, Mr. Jerrold's " Life " by no means completed.

As a " Prelude to Adventure " he has given us a delightful Chapte One reminiscent of his illustrious great grandparents. Among the fa simile letters are two from Dickens ; one to Blanchard, referring to th " beautiful manner and the true spirit of friendship " with which h had written a notice of the *Carol* which, as Dickens wrote, had " fill my heart up to the brim and it is running over." Great days we those for friendships, before the Georgian epoch had made men callou and afraid of openly expressing their thoughts ! The other facsimi is part of a letter to Jerrold from Cremona, some months later ; also thanked him for a notice of the same book in " Punch." W know that letter ; but not all of it ; for like many other letters include in the official publication of " Letters," in 1880, it was severely edit by Mamie Dickens and her aunt, with the sad result that a delightf reference to Mrs. Dickens was entirely omitted. Here it is (Dicke had been asking Jerrold to pay him a visit to Genoa) :—

" If you were disposed to give Mrs. Jerrold a Christmas holida I will warrant my wife will be as gentle a little woman and as fr from affectation or formality of any kind, as ever breathed, a it would delight her very much to have the opportunity of co firming my judgment."

No Georgian editor would have deleted such a delightful piece intimacy !

* " Georgian Adventure." An Autobiography of Douglas Jerrold. Illustrated. 1 Collins.

. Jerrold also quotes a portion of a letter from Leigh Hunt to chard, every line of which "might have been given to Skimpole *leak House*, a portrait which Dickens's enemies denounce as a ature. The evidence for once is all on Dickens's side :—

"I have thought of you a hundred times" writes Hunt. "The th is that since hearing from you (which is the reason I did not d again), I have received some money, out of which I was very sirous of rescuing the amount of what you were so kind as to lige me with, in order that I might cut a very great figure by ticipating my promised date of payment. Alas ! After all, I not do it. The pounds vanish from my hands, almost as if they d not been ; and I am still left struggling, though relieved. Under se circumstances I will continue your debtor till the time mentioned d most assuredly shall not be at all impatient of the debt as an ligation, for it is a genuine pleasure (let who will, say to the ntrary) to be obliged by a genuine friend, and one who could ite as you did about it ; but we are neither of us rich ; and the ly thing which made me loth to ask the money, makes me anxious return it."

itor and Publisher of the Georgian quarter-of-a-century, Mr. glas Jerrold the second, has many lively stories to tell of a period in our memory. But the Victorians were not so backward in things as we are sometimes apt to think. Mr. Jerrold claims ave commenced "the discomforture of old-fashioned scholarship taste," which Mr. Gollancz completed by his present advertising nique, by adopting a double column newspaper advertisement ooks instead of the prevailing single column. But if Mr. Jerrold turn up "The Atheneum" one-hundred-and-one years ago, he find that Chapman and Hall used a whole page display for their uncement of the first number of *The Pickwick Papers*. The ing of that announcement was Dickens's own ; we wonder if display was his also !

SUMMER VISITORS TO LONDON

Coronation did not bring so many of our overseas members to on as we had anticipated, but the veteran and record-holding Secretary of the Philadelphia Branch, Mr. J. K. Thompson, made g stay with us and was a very welcome visitor. We were also ed to see once again Miss Sara Newton, of Philadelphia, and Mr. . C. Hersey, of Boston, and of welcoming Professor and Mrs. , of Winnipeg, Mrs. Hays, of Pittsburgh, and Mrs. White, of ria (B.C.). In September the London Committee arranged a ell supper to those who still happened to be in London at the ; it took place at the George and Vulture. We hope to see all friends again, and many others too, in the coming year.

LIVERPOOL

Lord Mayor of Liverpool attended the October meeting of this h, the first ordinary meeting to be so honoured. The occasion lecture by Canon Sexton on "Christian Symbolism." The Lord r addressed the members and expressed his great love and ation for the works of the novelist.

WHO WORE :—

Specially drawn for "The Dickensian" by Edward Payne

1. A white chip bonnet and a dress of celestial blue.
2. A bottle-green coat with a black velvet collar ; white trousers ; and carried a smart bamboo cane.
3. A white frock and spencer, with a white muslin bonnet—a broad damask belt, which encircled her slender waist, and by a happy ingenuity took off from the shortness of the spencer behind.
4. A high-shouldered black coat and waistcoat, drab breeches, and long drab gaiters.
5. Odd weedy little flowers in her bonnets and caps. She had furry articles for winter wear which stood up on end in a rampant manner, and were not at all sleek.
6. A maroon-coloured dress coat, with a velvet collar and cuffs of the same tint.
7. A prodigious pair of self-willed shoes ; blue stockings ; and a printed gown of many colours, and the most hideous pattern procurable for money ; and a white apron.
8. A brown suit of clothes, pretty well worn, but very well kept, with large square cuffs and large flaps to the pockets.
9. One simple deep green robe, or mantle, bordered with white fur . . . its feet, observable beneath the ample folds of the garment, were bare ; and on its head it wore no other covering than a holly wreath set here and there with shining icicles.
10. A green coat . . . buttoned closely up to his chin, and an old stock, without a vestige of shirt collar, ornamented his neck. His long black hair escaped in negligent waves beneath each side of his old pinched up hat.
11. A smart little cherry-coloured mantle, with a hood of the same drawn over her head, and on the top of that hood a little straw hat trimmed with cherry-coloured ribbons, the wickedest and most provoking head-dress that ever malicious milliner devised . . . a cruel little muff, and a heart-rending pair of shoes.
12. A large high-crowned hat, a worn dark suit, a pair of capacious shoes, and a dirty white neckerchief sufficiently limp and crumpled to disclose the greater portion of his wiry throat.
13. A suit of black, with strings at the knees and stockings below them.
14. A brown surtout, and black tights and shoes . . . His clothes were shabby but he had an imposing shirt-collar on.

Contributed by Peggy Webling.

(The Answers will be printed in the Spring number.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Specially Drawn by] [*Edward Payne*

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

Sir.—Recently I came by chance upon the following reference to spontaneous combustion in a volume of the "Literary Gazette" for June 28th, 1828.

It will be noticed that the *effects* of this form of dissolution are more particularly mentioned, details of which Dickens was probably not ignorant, but doubtless from delicacy omitted in the story, the idea itself being at the time sufficiently revolutionary, as appears from one of his Prefaces.

S. F. D. Howarth.

SOME NOTES UPON THE PHENOMENON CALLED "SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION"

The possibility of the spontaneous combustion of the human body has frequently been doubted. A memoir lately read to the Académie des Sciences, however, completely establishes the fact; and states the following as the principal circumstances attending it, derived from chemical and medical observations on no fewer than fifteen cases of its occurrence. (1) The greater part of the persons who have fallen a victim to spontaneous combustion have made an immoderate use of alcoholic liquors. (2) The combustion is almost always general, but sometimes is only partial. (3) It is much rarer among men than among women, and they are principally old women. There is but one case of the combustion of a girl, seventeen years of age, and that was only partial. (4) The body and the viscera are invariably burnt, while the feet, the hands, and the top of the skull, almost always escape combustion. (5) Although it requires several faggots to burn a common corpse, incineration takes place in these spontaneous combustions without any effect on the most combustible matters in the neighbourhood. In an extraordinary instance of a double combustion operating on two persons in one room, neither the apartment nor the furniture was burnt. (6) It has not been at all proved that the presence of an inflamed body is necessary to develop spontaneous human combustions. (7) Water, so far from extinguishing the flame, seems to give it more activity; and when the flame has disappeared, secret combustion goes on. (8) Spontaneous combustions are more frequent in winter than in summer. (9) General combustions are not susceptible of cure, only partial. (10) Those who undergo a spontaneous combustion are the prey of a very strong internal heat. (11) The combustion bursts out all at once, and consumes the body in a few hours. (12) The parts of the body not attacked are struck with sphacelus. (13)

In persons who have been attacked by spontaneous combustion, a putrid degeneracy takes place, which soon leads to gangrene.

(Sphacelus = gangrene.)

DICKENS—REFORMER AND RADICAL

SIR.—Mr. James Fisher disputes that Dickens was a social reformer Apparently a social reformer must possess specified qualifications like a surveyor or an electrical engineer, and unless he works according to some planned theory he cannot be a social reformer. Yet Lord James, of Hereford, has declared that Dickens was the greatest social reformer that England ever had ! If the difference between these two opinions were merely a matter of labels we need scarcely concern ourselves over the question, but throughout Mr. Fisher's article there is an endeavour to belittle the work which Dickens accomplished and to exhibit it as something ineffective and futile.

What Mr. Fisher wishes us to recognise is, I think, that since Dickens's day we have evolved a theory or system of economics which could prevent poverty and afford to everyone a fair share of worldly goods and that Dickens has contributed nothing towards the construction of this theory. But is it not true that these ideas received a great impetus from the writings of Dickens ? He may not have submitted any plan, but he convinced his fellow-men that some drastic amendment was a necessity and in this respect was a pioneer of reform. " Uncle Tom's Cabin " did not tell people how to end the slave trade ; must it therefore be brushed aside as mere story-telling ? The Gospels teach us a great deal but they give no directions as to practical ways and means. We are to conclude, therefore, that the fruits of Christianity (so far as we have realised them) are just the product of modern planning ! Mr. Fisher blames Dickens because he glorified private charity. What Dickens glorified was the charity which is born of brotherhood. To-day, as Mr. Fisher points out, living conditions are severely regulated by the State ; but what comprises the State and what or who brought about the change in its attitude ?

By a coincidence there is in the same issue of *The Dickensian* a review of a book by Mr. T. A. Jackson, entitled " Chas. Dickens : The Progress of a Radical," which takes just the opposite point of view. The book attempts to diagnose the development of Dickens and to trace how he emerged from being merely a story-teller and character-sketcher into a zealous reformer making calculated attacks upon the foundations of our social system. I do not wish to criticise this book adversely because I am indebted to it, in some degree for insight, but to a greater degree for clear exposition of some of the plots and for the great pleasure which always accompanies my reading of fair Dickensian comments.

At the same time I cannot find and am not prepared to believe that Dickens' reforming zeal ever took any carefully designed course or had any systematised method. It arose out of his abounding sympathy for and love of his fellow-man. He could not keep it out of his stories, but his story-telling genius and his matchless character-drawing had to find employment and, in a way that is almost magical, he combined his genius with purpose. I think Mr. Jackson is, perhaps unconsciously, subscribing to this when, in speaking of *Little Dorrit*, he says the story " is in fact an allegory of whose true purport its author was only partly

conscious"—a remark which indicates that we are reading into the novels something which was never in the mind of the author.

Dickens's influence is immeasurable. He works on the minds and hearts of people in a way that can be attributed to no other author. The people read his stories for pleasure but gather wisdom and sympathy on the way. Had Dickens written tracts or pamphlets, or even had he allowed the purpose of reform to take complete charge of his stories and ride and steer them with this single object he would never have captured the reading public or achieved his enormous success. There was doubtless development in Dickens and probably some modification of opinion, but to endeavour to trace this development by set stages and discover any regulated design is perhaps very interesting but, on the whole, futile. On the other hand, to regard the absence of method as proof that Dickens was ineffective as a reformer is, I think, untrue and unjust.

Liverpool. GEO. H. BOOTHMAN.

SIR.—The following extract from a speech on Administrative Reform made by Dickens in June, 1855, at Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, is a fitting commentary on the controversy appearing in your pages —

> My sphere of action—which I shall never change—I shall never overstep, further than this, or for a longer period than I do to-night. By literature I have lived, and through literature I have been content to serve my country ; and I am perfectly well aware I cannot serve two masters. In my sphere of action I have tried to understand the heavier social grievances, and to help to set them right.

Hove. A. E. BROOKES CROSS.

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BREATHES there a Dickensian with a soul so dead, who has never responded to the name of Astleys ? This and this alone was "the Greatest Show on Earth," as Mr. Willson Disher, that devout lover of clowns and sawdust, makes quite clear in his story* of the rise and fall of the famous circus in the Westminster Bridge Road. Ducrow, Miss Woolford, and Adah Isaacs Menken are surely household names with all Dickensians. Mr. Disher tells us all about them in his amazing record covering a century of the showman business in London, in Paris, and on the road. There are some wonderful pictures, too, to gladden our eyes. Decidedly a book to place on the Dickens shelf beside "Dickens and the Drama," and kindred works.

MONTREAL

A LARGE company filled Victoria Hall to capacity on the opening night in October. The Hon. President, Ven. Archdeacon Gower-Rees gave a most able address on "Social Reform in the Days of Dickens," which our President, Whitfield Aston, truly said was in itself worth the price of membership. The Dickens Players Club presented "Mice and Men" on November 16th and 17th. At the November meeting Rev. F. H. Wilkinson gave an address on "Dickens and Kingsley." The Tiny Tim Night is fixed for December 14th. It is always one of the happiest occasions of the year.

* "The Greatest Show on Earth." By M. Willson Disher, with an introduction by D. L Murray. Illustrated. G. Bell and Sons, Ltd. 15s.

DICKENSIANA OF THE HALF YEAR

BOOKS

The History of the English Novel. From the Brontës to Meredith, by Ernest A. Baker, D.Lit., M.A. H. F. and G. Witherby, Ltd. 16s.

English Inns and Roadhouses, by George Long. Illustrated. T. Werner Laurie, Ltd. 20s.

When Victoria Began to Reign. Coronation Scrap-book, compiled by M. Lambert. Illustrated. Faber and Faber, Ltd. 12s. 6d.

Early Victorian Drama, 1830-1870, by Ernest Reynolds, Ph.D. W. Heffer and Sons, Ltd., Cambridge. 6s.

Georgian Adventure, by Douglas Jerrold. Illustrated. Collins. 15s

Greatest Show on Earth, by M. Willson Disher. With an introduction by D. L. Murray. Illustrated. G. Bell and Sons, Ltd. 15s.

Les Papiers Postumes du Pickwick-Club. Traduction de Paul Dottin. Nouvelle Revue Critique, Paris.

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES

"Greatest Clown Ever," by Leo Mason. *Blackburn Times*, 4th June.

"The Man Who Made *Pickwick*," by Dale Carnegie. *Evening Telegraph*, Dundee, 26th July.

"Dickens Writes to his Friends." Illustrated. *The Sphere*, 3rd July.

"Hatton Garden Police Court," by E. Kilburn Scott, *Engineering Gazette*, June.

"An Unwritten Episode in the Life of Samuel Weller, Esq," by C. Favatt Robinson. Illustrated. *Windsor Magazine*. May.

"These Knew Dickens." *Chatham Observer*, 21st May.

"Wine and Food Dickensiana," by Charles Riddell Williams. *Wine and Food*, Summer No., 1937.

"Secrets of Famous Lives," by Louis T. Stanley. No. 2, Dickens. *Liverpool Evening Express*, 25th August, and *South Wales Argus*, 25th October.

"London's Literary Shrines." *The Age*, Melbourne, 17th July.

"Bill Sikes—His Centenary," by J. P. Quaine. *Melbourne Argus*, 24th July.

"The Pomfret Arms, Towcester," by W. C. Boswell. Illustrated. *Nottingham Journal*, 26th August.

"Charles Dickens's Visits to Belfast," by Jack Loudan. Illustrated. *Irish Daily Telegraph*, 26th August.

"Associations of Dickens with Swansea." *Herald of Wales*, 4th September.

"Dickens and the Temple." *Law Times*, 11th September.

"The Brighton Coach Leaving the White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly." Reproduction in colours, of a contemporary picture by an unknown artist. *The Tatler*, 8th September.

"Two Hearts that Beat as One," by Illingworth. Cartoon. *Punch*, 15th September.

"Montague Tigg, the Brazen Cadger," by Robert Lynd. *John o' London's Weekly*, 22nd October.

"Feasting with the Cratchits," by The Londoner. *Evening News*, 8th November.

DIARY OF DICKENS FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS

BALHAM.
Dec. 10—" Dickens Then and Now," by Mr. J. H. McNulty.
Jan. 14—Annual " Swarry."
Feb. 11—" A Londoner Remembers," by Mr. O. D. Savage.
Rambles on Jan. 22nd and Feb. 19th.

BATH.
Dec. 13—" Tit Bits," by Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Giddings.
Jan. 3—New Year's Party and Dance.
24—" The Family in the Days of Dickens," by Florence Tylee.
Feb. 7—Birthday Dinner.
Jan. 10, Feb. 21—Reading Circle.

BLACKBURN.
Dec. 11—Annual Dinner.
Jan. 7—" On Oliver Twist," by Mr. N. W. E. Hamm.
18—" A French Dickens," by Fr. John Cowell, S.M.
Feb. 4—" Dickensian Romance," by Mr. Timothy Holden.
10—Birthday Celebration.
25—" The History and Development of the Poor Law," by Mr. George B. Pye.

BLACKPOOL.
Dec. 2—Visit from Preston Branch.
16—" Workhouse Régime, Then and Now," by Mrs. A. Greenwood.
Jan. 3—New Year's Party.
13—Visit from the Blackpool Literary and Scientific Society.
27—" Mr. Bumble's Choice," by Miss Helen Butterworth, and " Child Life Through the Century," by Miss Swift.
Feb. 7—Birthday Dinner.
22—Visit to Preston Branch.
24—Lecture-Recital by Mr. B. Davies.

BRISTOL AND CLIFTON.
Dec. 8—" Edwin Drood," by Messrs. Purchase and Robins.
Jan. 12—" Mr. Nightingale's Diary," by Mr. Chapman.
Feb 7—Birthday Dinner.
9—" Bleak House," by Mr. Stanley.

BROMLEY.
Dec. 8—Annual Dinner.
Jan. 12—Readings from *Oliver Twist.*
Feb 9—Paper by Mr. J. H. McNulty.
Mar. 9—Readings from *Oliver Twist.*
Apl. 6—Examination Paper and Papers by members.

CHELTENHAM.
Dec. 3—" A Birthday," by Mr. H. O. Barnett, and a Sketch, arranged by Mrs. Dye.
Jan. 7—New Year's Party and Dance.
Feb. 4—" Four Gallant Gentlemen," by Messrs. Beasley, Colwell, Dye, and Williams. Sketch arranged by Miss E. Dunn.

CIRENCESTER.
Dec. 6—*A Christmas Carol*, produced by Mr. J. T. Henderson.
Jan. 10—" Some Contemporaries of Dickens," by Mrs. Ferriman, Miss Goddard, and Mrs. Jackson.
Feb. 7—" All the Year Round," by Mr. J. H. McNulty.

EASTBOURNE.
Dec. 7—Dramatic entertainment " Scenes from *Oliver Twist.*"
Jan. 4—Lecture-Recital by Miss Russell Davies, " More Dickens, Grave and Gay."
Feb. 1—Dramatic entertainment, " Dickensian Schoolmistresses."
5—Birthday Party.
Study Circle on Dec. 14, Jan. 11, 25, Feb. 8, 22.

EDGWARE.
Dec. 3—Christmas Party.
Jan. 7—" Ancient Britons and Romans," by Mr. Trelawny Roberts.
Feb. 4—" Folk Music of Other Lands," by Mr. Cecil R. Dudley.
11—Birthday Party.
Rambles on Dec. 4 and Jan. 22.

EDINBURGH.
Dec. 2—" Wanderings in Jugoslavia," by Mr. Harold Skelton.
17—Annual Dinner. Lord Macgregor Mitchell, LL.D., will propose the Immortal Memory.
Jan. 13—" Dickens and Religion," by Rev. Peter Fleming.
Feb. 10—" Anent Auld Leith," by Mr. John Russell.
25-6—Dramatic Performance, " Mr. Boffin's Secretary."

HACKNEY AND STOKE NEWINGTON.
Dec. 13—" Dickens in Switzerland," by Mr. J. H. McNulty.
Jan. 12—Dickens Sketches by Miss Jolly and her Players.
29—Visit to Geffreye Museum.
Feb. 14—" The Eighteen-thirties," by Mr. S. J. Rust.
26—Annual Dinner at Palace Hotel.

HATFIELD.
Dec. 18—Dramatic Section's evening.
Jan. 10—" An Account of a Recent Visit to the West Indies," by Mr. A. W. Bond.
Feb. 7—Birthday Party.
14—Whist Drive for the Dickens House Appeal.

HULL.
Dec. 3—Readings from *Oliver Twist*, arranged by Mr. Alan Phillips.
17—" Sub-Standard Cinematography," by Mr. R. Dally, M.Sc.
29—Lonely Old Folks' Christmas Party.
Jan. 14—" Was Charles Dickens a Social Reformer ? " by Mr. Henry J. Barney.
29—" Some Aspects of Swiss Scenery," by Mr. A. Charlesworth, M.Sc.
Feb. 7—Birthday Dinner.
18—A Dickensian Reading, arranged by Mr. and Mrs. H. Lawton.

LANCASTER.
Dec. 9—" The Rogues Gallery," by Mr. W. A. Millington.
Jan. 14—Lecture by Mr. D. G. Hopewell, M.A.
Feb. 19—Short Papers by Mrs. Scott, Mr. T. Cann Hughes and Mr. S. Slinger.

LEYTON.
Dec. 29—" A Dickens Pilgrimage," by Mr. E. W. Brown.
Jan. 26—" Dickens and Music," by Miss Ella Fairall, L.R.A.M.
Feb. 6—Commemoration Service at St John's Church.
23—A Dramatic evening arranged by the ladies.

LIVERPOOL.
Dec. 1—" Sir Walter's Edinburgh," by Rev. J. M. Joss, M.A.
15—Christmas Party.
Jan. 5—" Some Reflections on *A Christmas Carol*," by Mr. E. McLoughlin.
19—Lantern Lecture on the Dickens House, by Miss Minards.
Feb. 2—" Dickens and his Friends," by Miss C. A. Jacobsen.
16—Dramatic Readings, arranged by Miss M. E. Harper.
26—Birthday Dance and Whist Drive.

LONDON.
Dec. 6—" A Dickens Flitch." Chairman: Mr. G. Stuart-Bunning.
10—Christmas Party in Fagin's Den. Costumes to be judged by Mr. Felix Aylmer.
Jan. 17—" A London Pilgrimage." Lantern Lecture by Mr. Wm. A. Clark, F.R.P.S.
Feb. 7—Birthday Dinner. Lord Hewart in the Chair. The Immortal Memory by Mr. Norman Birkett, K.C.
16—Lecture by Mr. Bernard Darwin.

MANCHESTER.
Dec. 3—" Some Villains in English Literature," by Mr. A. S. Mason.
Jan. 14—Dingley Dell Party.
28—" Impressions of *Oliver Twist*," by Messrs. H. E. Evans, T. H. Moffett G. M. Farmer, and J. Bradley.
Feb. 9-12—Birthday Celebration Dramatic performances.
19—" Miscellaneous Papers," by Miss M. Farmer, Miss E. H. A. Turner, Mrs H. E. Evans, and Rev. C. Burke.

NOTTINGHAM.
Dec. 1, 9, 16—Readings from *Great Expectations*.
Jan. 7—"Dickens and Christmas," with Recital of *Dr. Marigold's Prescriptions*, by Mr. J. Cooper Sands.
13-27—Readings from *Great Expectations*.
Feb. 5—Costume Birthday Party.
10–23—Readings from *Great Expectations*.

PHILADELPHIA.
Dec. 15—Christmas Party.
Jan. 26—Annual Meeting.
Feb. 7—Birthday Dinner.
23—To be announced.

PITTSBURGH.
Dec. 13—Christmas Dinner. Speaker, Rev. Harry Allan Price.
Jan. 10—"Dickens as an Educator," by Mr. J. G. Hays, and "History of Public School System," by Miss Alice Haworth and Mr. Sayre Millen.
Feb. 7—Birthday Dinner. Speakers, Miss Susan Boyd and Mr. F. P. Mayer.
10—Panel Discussion by Teachers, led by Mr. C. L. Wilson, and other papers by Mrs. Wilson, Mr. W. Leigh, and Mrs. Montgomery.

PLYMOUTH.
Dec. 7—Christmas Party.
Jan. 4—Literary and musical evening arranged by Lieut.-Commander and Mrs. Hutchings.
12—Tiny Tims Tea and entertainment at the Guildhall.
18—Dramatic and musical evening, arranged by Mrs. R. Chase and Miss Crews.
Feb. 1—Birthday Celebration, arranged by Mrs. G. McClusky and Mr. W. C. Spear.
16—Dramatic and musical evening, arranged by Mrs. Lilian Annear.

PRESTON.
Dec. 2—Visit to Blackpool Branch.
13—Recital of *Dr. Marigold's Prescriptions*, by Mr. W. Lister.
Jan. 18—"Railways in Dickens's Day," by Mr. J. D. Billington, M.I.E.E.
25—Discussion on *Oliver Twist*, led by Mr. F. W. Jackson, B.A.
Feb. 10—Birthday Dinner.
15—"Novelists who Influenced Dickens," by Canon Wells.
22—Visit from Blackpool Branch.

REDDITCH.
Dec. 1—Lecture by Rev. C. M. Stewart King.
Jan. 5—Social Evening.
Feb. 3—Lecture by Rev. H. Waters.
7—Birthday Celebration.

ROCHESTER.
Dec. 9—"Railways in Dickens's Day," by Mr. J. D. Billington.
Jan. 12—"An Evening with *Oliver Twist*," arranged by Miss Butler.
29—Annual Party.

RUGBY.
Dec. 7—The ladies will entertain.
Jan. 4—Readings from *Christmas Books* and *Stories*.
Feb. 7—Birthday Celebration Dance.

ST. PANCRAS.
Dec. 13—Extracts from *A Christmas Carol*, and other Christmas singers.
Jan. 10—"The Eighteen Thirties," by Mr. S. J. Rust.
Feb. 14—Debate. Chairman: Mr. Houlton.
Rambles on Dec. 11, Jan. 15, 29, Feb. 19.

SHEFFIELD.
Dec. 10—Film of *A Christmas Carol*.
Jan. 14—Lecture Recital, by Rev. W. J. Targett, *The Old Curiosity Shop*.
19—Whist Drive.
Feb. 4—Lecture-Recital, by Rev. T. W. Nicholson, *Great Expectations*.
5—Birthday Dinner.
19—Tiny Tims Party.

SOUTHAMPTON.
Dec. 9—"Some Dickens Courtships," by Mr. W. H. Lowry.
Jan. 13—"A Comparison Between Cruelty and Kindness on a Child's Mind," by Mr. C. S. Hair.
Feb. 18—Birthday Celebration Party.

SOUTHEND.
Dec. 11—Children's Party.
17—Annual Costume Dance.
Jan. —Whist Drive.
Feb. 4—Birthday Dinner and Dance.
Reading Circle on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays.

TEWKESBURY.
Dec. 7—"The Good Things of Dickens," by Mr. H. de Courey Peach.
Jan. 4—New Year's Party.
Feb. 1—Birthday Dinner.

TORONTO.
Dec. 16—*A Christmas Carol* directed by Geoffrey and Isobel Hutton.
Jan. 13—Address by Rt. Rev. R. J. Renison, M.A., D.D.
Feb. 5—Birthday Celebration.

VANCOUVER.
Dec. 15—Christmas Meeting.
Jan. 27—Debate, "Was Dickens's Attack on the Yorkshire Schools Justified?"
Feb. 5—Birthday Dinner.
24—Card Party.

VICTORIA.
Dec. —Christmas Party.
Jan. 17—Lecture by Rev. A. E. Whitehouse.
Feb. 21—Lecture by Mrs. Nellie McClung.

WELLINGBOROUGH.
Dec. 11—"Round the Fire with Dickens." Five-minute readings.
31—New Year's Eve Party.
Jan. 15—Debate between Mrs. Warwick and Mr. Deacon.
29—"Law and Lawyers of Dickens," by Rev. W. H. Cauldwell.
Feb. 12—"Dickens and his Publishers," by Miss Muriel Silk.
26—"Stipendiary Girls and Spinsters," by Miss Mary L. Pendered.

WINNIPEG.
Dec. 9—Recital of *A Christmas Carol*, by Mr. H. G. Wade.
Jan. 13—"Why I like to Read Dickens," by Mr. E. K. Williams, K.C.
Feb. 7—Birthday Dinner.

WOODVILLE.
Dec. 10—"The Religion of Dickens," by Councillor H. Forman, J.P.
Jan. 7—Social evening, arranged by Miss Chandler and Mr. W. H. Shepherd.
21—"Is Dickens a Living Force To-day?" by Rev. F. G. Stafford.
Feb. 4—"Charles Dickens," by Rev. S. W. Bazalgette.
7—Birthday Celebration.
18—"The Ladies Entertain," arranged by Miss Chandler.

Syllabus from Montreal received too late for insertion.

EXCELLENT WORK AND REFORM AT PITTSBURGH

Every June the members of the Pittsburgh Branch entertain some two hundred Tiny Tims of their city, at a picnic. This is excellent work.

The Dickensian feels complimented that at the study class of this branch on March 14th next, Mr. Fisher's recent article "Reform as a Dickens Background" is to be discussed by Miss Eunice Overman, and that Miss E. Jacobs and Mr. Henry Peel are to give accounts of two English reformers, the Earl of Shaftesbury and Sir Robert Peel.

THE FELLOWSHIP IN LOS ANGELES

The Los Angeles branch flourishes exceedingly. Mr. Wm. Crosby Bennett is lecturing on *Nicholas Nickleby* during the season, and in the first of the series dealt with "the queen of all the widows in Dickens," Mrs. Nickleby, the prototype of Dickens's mother. Mr. Philip Hunt (of London) entertained the members recently with a talk "In and out of London with Dickens." Mrs. Hawkesley, the eldest daughter of the late Sir Henry Dickens, is at present residing in Los Angeles, and will be entertained by the branch.

A NEW FRENCH EDITION OF DICKENS

THE first volume of this is before us, "Les Papiers Postumes du Pickwick-Club," and we find it the very best of the several translations we have read. The translation is the work of Professor Paul Dottin, and the publishers are the Nouvelle Revue Critique, Paris. The edition is under the distinguished direction of Mr. Léon Lemonnier, whose critical work on Dickens has already been referred to in *The Dickensian*. Mr. Lemonnier writes for this first volume a long and extremely able contribution entitled "Génie de Dickens," and Professor Dottin supplies an equally excellent introduction. The book also contains some very useful explanatory footnotes. We heartily compliment all concerned on a really great achievement. We know that Dickens is much read and greatly admired in France. This new edition merits a large sale and we feel confident it will achieve its reward.

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TWO AUSTRALIAN BRANCHES

"WAS Oliver Twist entitled to ask for more ?" was the subject of a lively debate at the Adelaide Branch in September. During October, Mr. T. C. Woodham lectured on "The Inns of Dickens," and the blind Vice-President of the Branch, Mr. G. T. Lyons, read a paper in braille on *Edwin Drood*. In November, Mr. Woodham lectured on *Little Dorrit*, and the feature of the December meeting will be the Christmas Party.

A report comes to hand of a very full season just completed by the Melbourne Branch. We are sorry we do not receive from either of these Branches advance notices of their meetings to include in the Diary.

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